ZION'S WATCH TOWER And Herald of Christs Presence

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VIEW FROM THE TOWER

We wish the WATCH TOWER readers, all and everywhere, a very happy New Year—1897. And whether or not they get the fulfillment of our wish depends almost exclusively upon themselves, individually,—in the cases of those who belong fully to the Lord, by a full heart consecration, a full self-surrender to his will, as expressed in his Word.

Circumstances may change, hopes or health may fail, trusted friends may become cool or even become enemies, poverty and lack of life's necessities may stare some in the face; yet none of these, nor all of them, should they fall to our lot, need hinder the true Christian from having a happy year.

To the worldly this will be both impossible and incomprehensible; for the world has no sources of comfort and peace and joy other than the creature-comforts of the present life. When deprived of these they have nothing but misery and despair; and these evils are only increased as knowledge and refinement increase the appreciation of earthly good things. Hence the remarkable increase of suicides in recent years, especially in the most civilized lands, and wherever civilization extends;—for instance, in Japan, where it is said that the average of suicides per year is over seven thousand. Respecting suicides here and in Great Britain the Rev. P. S. Henson, D. D. (Baptist) of Chicago said recently in a sermon:—

"There never was such unrest in the world as now. The old world is threatened with an upheaval. What is the matter with New York and Chicago? Humanity is not constituted to be satisfied. People are going mad faster than you can build mad-houses to put them in. In London the suicides number ten a day [3,600 a year], New York is not much better. There was never such unrest. What the world wants, the rich want, all classes want, is Jesus Christ."

But the child of God has other than earthly friends and joys and hopes and prospects. He is *rich*, whatever his outward condition may appear; rich in the fact that his debt of sin has been paid for him; rich in the assurances of God's Word that his present experiences are all under the supervision of divine wisdom and love, and are all being overruled for his highest good (Rom. 8:28); rich in joy and hope through the present trials and experiences faithfully and patiently endured. God is preparing him for future honors, and so he is enabled to reckon those trials which once would have utterly crushed him as "light afflictions which are but for a moment," and which, faithfully accepted, "will work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Thus he looks, not at the transitory things that are seen, but at the invisible and eternal things. Thus, like Moses of old, he endures as seeing him who is invisible, a present help in every time of trouble. Whatever he may possess of earthly luxury and comfort he accepts with gratitude, realizing himself not more deserving than millions less favored. Whatever he may lack, he reflects that the faithful of every age have been required to "endure hardness as good soldiers," and that our blessed Saviour and his noble apostles, in choosing the course of faithfulness to the truth, denied themselves and endured hungerings, thirstings, privations and loss of friends, and yet, though poor, they made many rich (2 Cor. 6:10) with the true riches of grace—"godliness with contentment," "great gain," which the world can neither give, nor take away. In every condition these may hear the Word of God saying,—"All things are yours, ... for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

"Why should the children of the King
Go mourning all their days?"

The Christian's secret of a happy life lies in his *knowing* and *trusting* the heavenly Father and the heavenly Bridegroom. Even worldly physicians, skeptics, are coming to recognize the fact that the peace of God ruling in and keeping the heart is not only an excellent medicine, but a great preservative of health. How many, looking back, can see that not only their spiritual but also their physical health has improved since they found the Lord "a very present help" in time of trouble! If they had nervous troubles which formerly caused them sleepless nights and haggard looks, and which almost unfitted them for life's duties and responsibilities, they have doubtless found some improvement since they have heard the voice saying,—

"Cast all your care upon the Lord, for he careth for you."—1 Pet. 5:7.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God."—1 John 3:1.

"Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear [reverence] him."—Psa. 103:13.

"Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart."—Psa. 31:24.

"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want . . . . his goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever."—Psa. 23:6.

True, the exceeding great and precious promises of God's Word may not hinder us from feeling pain, but they will modify the pain and its frequency. Physicians are of one opinion on this subject, that the mind, the brain, the nervous center of our being, exercises a great influence over all of our physical sensations, either an aggravating or a pacifying influence. Truly did Solomon, the wise, say that the Lord's word is a valuable "medicine."—Prov. 3:8.

But we have said that these blessings come through *knowing* and *trusting* God: some fail to get the blessings because of a lack of knowledge; others having the knowledge lack the trust, the faith; still others, and they are probably in the majority among consecrated Christians, enjoy a small measure of these blessings when they might have them in abundant measure by a more thorough knowledge of God through his Word (accompanied, of course, with obedience to the spirit of their knowledge) and by the exercise of greater trust in the Faithful Promiser.

We exhort all the *consecrated* TOWER readers to join with us at the beginning of the New Year, in a remembrance and

renewal of our covenant with the Lord,—to be obediently and lovingly *his*, in thought, word and deed—and in harmony therewith, and to the intent that we may enjoy his blessings to our fullest capacity and under all conditions, let us put on the armor of truth and righteousness; fastening the same upon us with the graces of the spirit. As an assistance we suggest as a text to be remembered and practiced daily, the words of the Apostle Paul (2 Cor. 7:1)—

"Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, *perfecting* holiness in the fear of the Lord."—2 Cor. 7:1.

And whoever would have success in carrying out the foregoing resolves should not only make the engagement at the throne of the heavenly grace, but should at all times and under all circumstances preserve the spirit of thankfulness and prayer. As the Apostle expresses it, he should "pray without ceasing, and in *everything* give thanks." For what son is he that the father chasteneth not? If ye be without chastisements and lessons, then are ye not sons. The heavenly Father chastens for correction, every son whom he receives.

PULPIT, PLEASE TAKE NOTICE

The WATCH TOWER is the Editor's general pulpit. As he does not desire to preach to any except willing hearers, it is as proper that the WATCH TOWER should stop at the end of your subscription as that he should cease to be pastor of the Allegheny Church if not selected in December, therefore, except in very exceptional cases, the paper will be stopped at the end of the subscription year. All who wish the TOWER for 1897 should send word at once. The terms are so liberal as to leave no excuse. It is provided *free* to the Lord's poor who send a card each year stating the fact. Those who can pay later, will please send a card so stating.

By responding promptly you will save us much trouble.

"ALL THE ISRAEL OF GOD"

A Brother writes: I have been in the habit of speaking of the true church as *spiritual* Israel; recently the propriety of so doing has been called in question by certain "advanced teachers" who claim that since the time of Rehoboam the name Israel is Scripturally applied to the revolting ten tribes only. I have looked up the question in Young's Concordance, but find nothing satisfactory. I cannot find that the term Spiritual Israel is used a single time in the Bible. Please give us some help on this question.

We reply: We are aware that there are a few who confine the term Israel to the *ten tribes* which revolted from Rehoboam and the *two tribes* (Judah and Benjamin) which upheld him. And they have an object in so doing,—they have a theory about the *ten tribes* having been "lost," and claim that they have now "found" them;—that the English-speaking people of the world are the ten lost tribes—Israel. Earthly *patriotism* no doubt has much to do with the theory in those who have not taken a strong enough hold upon the heavenly citizenship. Although we also are Saxons according to the flesh, yet we have learned that as there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female, in Christ Jesus, so there is neither French nor English, German nor Spaniard; for all who are in Christ are *one* "royal priesthood," a holy nation, a peculiar people, of which Christ is the Head. The spread of British influence during the past century and a half has indeed been remarkable; but let us not forget that similarly Spain "ran over the wall" three centuries ago, and ruled much of North America, all of Central and South America, and many of the isles of the sea; and that her language still dominates a territory almost or quite as extensive as that in which English is the prevailing tongue. Did Spanish prosperity prove them to be Israel? If not, why should Anglo-Saxon prosperity be recognized as a foundation for such an assumption?

The endeavor to uphold *their theory* (which is not even a "tradition of the elders") seemingly blinds those who become interested in it, so that they ignore, and apparently *cannot see* the plain teaching of the Scriptures on this subject,—Israel. The fact is that the phrase, "ten lost tribes," cannot be found in the Bible; it can only be found in the writings of those who have adopted the theory by which they are blinding themselves. Nor is the term, "lost Israel," nor any analogous expression, found in the Scriptures. The expression, "lost sheep of the house of Israel," twice used by our Lord (Matt. 10:6; 15:24), has no reference to lost *tribes*, but to individuals who had wandered from the Lord and were lost in the wilderness of sin and darkness.

As is well known to Bible students, there was a split in the twelve tribes for four hundred years,—ten tribes separating from the king's tribe, Judah, on the ground of kingly oppression.

It was natural enough that at the time of the revolt of the ten tribes the name Israel should be held by the majority, while Rehoboam's kingdom was naturally known as Judah, the name of his tribe, which constituted the majority of his supporters,—the tribe of Benjamin being very insignificant in numbers. This distinction continued for several centuries—until the captivity of Babylon. The ten tribes were captured first, and their people scattered throughout Babylonia; the two tribes (Judah and Benjamin) were captured later, and were similarly scattered in Babylon. From that time the pride and rivalry between the two divisions of Israel grew less and less. Common adversity made them feel their kinship again, and the name Israel became, as at first, the common name for "*the whole* house of Israel."

OLD TESTAMENT PROOFS OF THIS FACT

If in the Old Testament writings which recount the return from the Babylonian captivity we find the returning ones no longer recognizing themselves as two nations (Judah and Israel), but, on the contrary, find the whole people spoken of as *one*, and called "*Israel*," "the *twelve tribes* of Israel," etc., it is proof positive that the two sticks (representing the divided people—Ezek. 37:16, 20) had become reunited in Babylon before the return from the Babylonian Captivity. Indeed, as already shown,* the proclamation of King Cyrus releasing the captivity proves that at that time the petty jealousies between the two divisions had subsided, and that the two parts had again become one nation with the common name Israel; for the proclamation ignored Judah entirely, and was to *all the people* of the Lord God of *Israel*. And, as already shown,* people of various tribes did return to Palestine, although the tribe of Judah appears to have been specially loyal to the city and land; probably because to that tribe belonged the kingly promise, and because the "scepter" of influence, by divine intention, was to remain with that tribe until "Shiloh" should come. Besides, the ten tribes had gone into captivity more than one hundred years earlier, and their children had become more settled and rooted in the various parts of Media and Babylon than the tribe of Judah, a few of whose youth, who had seen the city of Jerusalem and the temple, lived long enough to return. However, many people—the vast majority—of the various tribes, including Judah and Benjamin, although reverent toward God and his worship, did not return to reside in Palestine. The total number of those who returned *of all Israel* was less than fifty-five thousand, whereas we have reason to suppose that "Judah" numbered several hundred thousand at the time of the captivity, and the ten tribes still more.—See 2 Chron. 28:6, 8, 15.

Even before the captivity a fellowship had sprung up between the people of the two divisions, so that when Josiah, king of Judah, instituted reforms, repaired the temple and made the great Passover celebration, the *remnant* of the *ten tribes* (for the mass had gone into captivity nearly a century before) joined in the work of repairing, by contributing money, etc., and joined in the feast of Passover at Jerusalem. (See 2 Chron. 24:9, 10; 25:18) And at a still earlier date the piously inclined of the ten tribes left their king and allied themselves with the tribe of Judah, and were known as "Jews."—2 Chron. 15:9.

The record of the return from the captivity is given by Ezra and Nehemiah; and if the breach were not already healed it would show itself in their accounts. But as Cyrus set free "*all the people* of the God of Israel," so the records show that Ezra and Nehemiah and the people regarded themselves as *Israel*. Let each one prove this for himself, by turning to and noting their use of the words "children of Israel," "people of Israel," "tribes of Israel," "all Israel," and the offering of sacrifices for all Israel, according to the *twelve tribes*, in the following passages:—

Ezra 2:2, 59, 70; 3:1, 11; 4:3; 6:16, 17; 7:7, 11, 13, 28; 8:25, 35; 10:5, 10.

Nehemiah 1:6; 2:10; 7:7, 61, 73; 9:1, 2; 10:33, 39; 11:3, 20; 12:47; 13:3, 18.

NEW TESTAMENT PROOFS THAT ISRAEL WAS NOT TEN TRIBES, BUT TWELVE, And Was Not Lost In the Days of Our Lord and the Apostles

The term, "lost sheep of the house of Israel," twice used by our Lord (Matt. 10:6; 15:24) most positively contradicts the theory that the ten tribes were *lost* in the days of our Lord's first advent; and also contradicts the thought that the

* See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II, Chap. 8.

term "Israel" *now* belongs to the *ten tribes* only. Read the passages cited, and see that the "lost sheep" were *individuals*—not tribes, and that Israel was not *lost*, because Christ had come to the *only Israel* whom he recognized, and, with his disciples for three and a half years, he went through "the cities of *Israel*" seeking therein "the lost sheep of the house of Israel."—Matt. 10:23.

That the term "Jew" had come to be synonymous with the term "Israel" is proved by the fact that those terms are repeatedly used interchangeably. For instance, Pilate wrote for the cross—"Jesus, the King of the *Jews*"; while the soldiers and others mocked, saying, Let Christ, "the King of *Israel*," come down from the cross.—See Matt. 27:42; Mark. 15:32.

Nathaniel was an "*Israelite* indeed," and his testimony to our Lord was, "Thou art the King of *Israel*." (John 1:47-49.) The people never thought about a king of Judah, but rather, when the Lord rode on the ass as King in fulfilment of the prophecy of Zechariah, the people strewed the way with palm branches, etc., shouting, "Blessed is the King of *Israel*." (John 12:13) Neither were the disciples thinking of Judah as a kingdom; for they asked the Lord, "Wilt thou at *this time* restore again the kingdom to *Israel*?" And talking over the matter on the way to Emmaus they said, sorrowfully and disappointedly,—"We trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed [recovered, delivered] *Israel*." (Luke 24:21; Acts 1:6) Is it reasonable to think that these all erred in their choice of language and *said* Israel but *meant* Judah? No! but it is proof positive that they recognized no "lost" tribes, but a reunited Israel—part "dispersed among the Gentiles," but coming to Jerusalem occasionally to keep the national festivals, and part at home in the land of Israel, in the cities of Israel, also trodden under foot by the Gentiles.

The angel, when directing Joseph to return from Egypt with Mary and the infant Jesus, said, "Go into the land of *Israel*." And the Apostle Matthew says, "He arose, and . . . . came into the land of *Israel*." (Matt. 2:20, 21) Were the angel and the apostle mistaken? What would they answer present-day teachers who would say to them, "You were mistaken, the *land* of Israel was then Great Britain and Ireland, and the savages of those islands were the true Israelites, and they had the only genuine king of Israel represented in 'King Fergus' or some of his posterity, and today represented by Queen Victoria?"

John the Baptist, when introducing Christ, declared that his ministry was to *Israel*. (John 1:31) His ministry surely was to the Jews; and if they are not Israel John was mistaken and told an untruth; yet the power of God was upon him from his mother's womb, and there never was a greater prophet. (Luke 7:28; Matt. 11:11) If John erred, how great a prophet must he be who could be relied upon to correct him?

Our Lord sent his disciples throughout Palestine to seek "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and he went also himself to "all the cities of Israel," and when commending the faith of the Gentile centurion, he said, "I have not found so great faith,—no, not in *Israel*." And, addressing Nicodemus, he called him "a ruler in *Israel*." Was our Lord mistaken? Had he missed the place in not going to the British isles? Or shall we not conclude that those who would pervert these plain testimonies of Scripture to support a *theory* are greatly mistaken? "Let God be true!"

APOSTOLIC TESTIMONY RESPECTING ISRAEL

The Apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, preaching the gospel under the influence of the holy spirit, addressed himself to the Jews, saying, "Ye men of *Israel*, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God *among you* by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the *midst of you*, as ye yourselves know: him . . . *ye* [men of *Israel*] have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain. . . . . Therefore, let *all the house of Israel* know that God hath made that same Jesus, whom *ye* [*men of Israel*] have crucified, both Lord and Christ."—Acts 2:22, 23, 36.

John was with Peter at the healing of the impotent man, a few days after the above discourse, and therefore joined in the statement,—"Ye men of *Israel*, why marvel ye at this?" (Acts 3:12) The same two were together preaching a few days later, when they were arrested and agreed in the testimony of Peter recorded in Acts 4:8, 10: "Peter, filled with the holy spirit, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people and *elders of Israel*, ... be it known unto you and unto *all the people of Israel*," etc. Evidently these apostles knew nothing about any "lost ten tribes" nor of any other people than the Jews entitled to the name *Israel*. Further along, verse 27, a prophecy which specifies *Israel* is quoted as fulfilled by the Jews, in the crucifixion of Christ; and proves to whom the name Israel belongs in prophecy.

All the apostles were together when "*all the senate* of the *children of Israel*" convened, and Gamaliel, a leading doctor of the law (of whose pupils Saul of Tarsus was one), a man noted among the people for his learning, showed that if Israel were lost he did not know of it, for he said to all the senate of the children of Israel, not, Ye men of Judah, but, "Ye men of *Israel*," etc.—Acts 5:21, 35.

The Apostle Paul, one of the learned men of his day, and one of the most exact and logical men of any day, did not know of it if the ten tribes were "lost," and surely thought quite the contrary, as is proved by the following statements of his respecting *Israel:*

He went to Antioch in Pisidia—among the Gentiles—and had no trouble in finding the "dispersed" *Israelites*, "the twelve tribes scattered abroad," and their synagogue; and getting opportunity to speak to the people (being recognized by the ruler of the synagogue as a man of education) he said, "Men of *Israel*, and ye [Gentiles] that fear God, give audience: The God of *this people of Israel* chose our fathers; . . . . God according to his promise raised unto *Israel* a Saviour, Jesus, when John [the Baptist] had first preached before his coming [manifestation] the baptism of repentance *to all the people of Israel*." (Acts 13:16, 17, 23, 24) In verses 43, 45 and 50 these "men of Israel" are called by the common name by which all Israelites are known today; namely, Jews. And it is worthy of note that, while a small band of Jews recently returned to Palestine claim to be of the tribe of Dan and another band claim to be of the tribe of Gad, yet, as a rule, the Jews today do not know from which of the twelve tribes they spring—so completely have the twelve tribes amalgamated into one nation.

When Paul returned to Jerusalem after several years absence among Gentiles, and especially among the people of Israel *scattered abroad* and dwelling everywhere among the Gentiles as today, he went into the temple and was recognized; and a tumult was raised by a man crying out: "Men of *Israel*, help!" etc. (Acts 21:28) That Jew evidently thought the same as all the rest, that Israel was again a united nation, and that all Jews were now, as before the rebellion,—"men of Israel."

When Paul pleaded his cause before King Agrippa, he said, "I think myself happy, King Agrippa, because I shall answer for myself this day before thee, ... especially *because I know thee to be expert in all customs and questions which are among the Jews*." When therefore he said, "Our *twelve tribes* instantly serving God, day and night, hope to come" to the promises which God made to our fathers, it proves conclusively that neither the Jewish scholar and lawyer, Paul, nor the well-informed Roman governor had any knowledge of the ten tribes being longer separated from the two tribes; nor did they know that the ten tribes were "lost;" nor did they in any manner or degree recognize the then heathen savages of the British isles as any part of the twelve tribes; for of the latter he expressly says, that they were *serving God* and *hoping in the promise* made to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. (Acts 26:2, 3, 7) The Epistle to the *Hebrews* was written to those same "twelve tribes instantly serving God" and hoping; especially such as were Israelites indeed and had accepted Christ: it is applicable therefore also to all those who from among the Gentiles have been grafted into the promises of God to Abraham, by *union* with Christ, the true, faithful "seed." Similarly, the Epistle of James was addressed to the "*twelve* tribes scattered abroad."—James 1:1, 2.

In his epistle to the Romans the Apostle Paul has much to say about *Israel* having rejected Christ and thus having brought blindness upon himself, unquestionably referring to the rejection and crucifixion of Christ by the Jews, "*all Israel*." He points out that so it was foretold by the prophets, and thus shows that the prophets are in accord with *this fulfilment;* and that they, when speaking of Israel, have no reference to our savage forefathers who, when found by "Saint Patrick" and "Saint Augustine," were totally devoid of knowledge of Jehovah, and of Moses and the law, and of David, and of Solomon, and of the prophets, and of all expectation of a Messiah. Such total ignorance and forgetfulness are not supposable in any people, even in longer period;—much less in Israelites who never lose their respect for Abraham and circumcision, nor for Moses and the law—even when they become "free-thinkers."

The Apostle then proceeds to show that it is the *same Israel* that *was blinded* because of rejecting Christ that is to be saved from that blindness at the second coming of Christ. (Compare Rom. 9:27, 31-33; 10: 1-3; 11:2, 7, 15, 24-28) Is it supposable that if there were *another* Israel recognized by

the holy Spirit and the Apostle they would have been ignored in the comprehensive statement of the entire plan of God from first to last, given in this wonderful and logical Epistle to the Romans? It is not supposable!

Furthermore, the Israelite according to the flesh who would lay claim to anything under God's covenant with Abraham must indicate his adherence to that covenant by observing the ordinance of circumcision. If, therefore, it could be proved that the Anglo-Saxon people have any Israelitish blood in their veins (and we deny that this has been proved), we may know that from the time they failed to perform the Israelitish ordinance of circumcision, that long they have been *cut off* from all share in the promises made to Israel. The law on this subject is found in Genesis 17:14 and is very explicit. It says: "The uncircumcised man child . . . . shall be *cut off* from his people [from Israel—shall no longer be an inheritor of the promises made to Israel; for in neglecting thus to indicate his fealty to the covenant]; HE HATH BROKEN MY COVENANT."

So then, if it could be proved that the Anglo-Saxons are descendants of Abraham (which we deny), it would avail nothing for them; for, having been uncircumcised for two thousand years, or as far back as their history extends, the *covenant of God would be broken*, so far as they were concerned, and they could inherit nothing under it. Neglect of circumcision by an Israelite constituted him an alien, a foreigner to the covenant of promise—a Gentile.

Our conclusion, therefore, respecting the blessing upon the Anglo-Saxon people is that, whoever their fathers may have been, they have no hope for any divine favor or blessing as Israelites according to the flesh; for such they are not. Their blessing has resulted from the fact that some of them became members of the body of Christ—the higher, the spiritual Israel; and that a larger number have been blessed through the influence of these, and become members of "the household of faith;" and that in general the light of the gospel, and the spirit of liberty which it always induces, has been shed abroad abundantly upon that people—bring with it great responsibilities, as well as great blessings.

SPIRITUAL ISRAEL

Freed from some false conceptions on the subject, we come now to our correspondent's principal question—"Is there a spiritual Israel which has taken the place of natural Israel? And, if so, Why cannot I find frequent references to her in the Scriptures?"

We answer, There is a spiritual Israel, but she has *not taken the place* of the fleshly Israel: her hopes are spiritual, not earthly; they are built upon heavenly or spiritual promises, not upon earthly promises: they are therefore called by the inspired writers "better promises." Nor does spiritual Israel *desire* to take the place of fleshly Israel: rather, she rejoices that, although fleshly Israel for the past eighteen centuries and more have been treated as *enemies* of God and blinded, for spiritual Israel's sake, yet the time is coming when she (fleshly Israel) shall obtain mercy through spiritual Israel's mercy and inherit the chief earthly blessing as the natural Seed of Abraham, when spiritual Israel, with Christ Jesus her Lord, shall have been exalted to heavenly glory.— Rom. 11:25-30.

Some who see that Christ and his church, "his body" or "bride," constitute the real seed of promise (Gal. 3:16, 29) are blinded to the fact that there is also an earthly "seed" which through Christ shall inherit earthly good things of divine favor, and be used also in blessing all the families of the earth; as earthly representatives of the spiritual (seed) Israel. During this Gospel age the "elect" church is constituted the seed by being *joined to Christ Jesus* as his bride or joint-heir. During the next age fleshly Israel will be favored with the opportunity to be the *first-born of the children* of Christ—who, as " the man Christ Jesus," gave his human *life* for them and for all of Adam's race; and will give the human life, thus purchased, to all who will receive it (by restitution) under the New Covenant—"to the Jew first."

There is the best of reasons, therefore, for the holy Spirit by the apostles not wholly appropriating the name Israel to spiritual Israel: it will be wanted later on by the natural seed. We do, however, find just what we should expect with a proper view before our minds; namely, the suggestion that the Gospel church is the higher Israel, the spiritual, which gets blessings which natural Israel never possessed, but which she was given the first opportunity to possess, and failed to obtain through unbelief and lack of consecration.—See Rom. 11:7; 9:31, 32.

For instance, the Apostle (1 Cor. 10:18) mentions the customs of the Jews, and calls them "Israel after the flesh," which implies a spiritual Israel, or Israel after the spirit; especially when he draws a comparison, as here, between *their* customs and *our* higher, more spiritual customs and arrangements. Again (2 Cor. 3:7, 13-18) he refers to Israel's Law Covenant and Israel's mediator, Moses, and the vail he put on to hide the glory, and shows that those who are only *fleshly* Israel are still hindered from seeing anything more than the *vail*, the *outward*, the *ceremonial*, while we (spiritual Israel) may see with open face the glory of the Lord, and be changed into the same glory as his joint-heirs. "Nevertheless," the Apostle declares, "when it shall turn to the Lord, the vail shall be taken away" from the eyes of Israel after the flesh;—after spiritual Israel has been selected and changed to the Lord's glory. Again (Gal. 6:16) the Apostle evidently refers to spiritual Israel, when he speaks of "the Israel of God." Again (Eph. 2:12, 13), writing to the church concerning the time when they were Gentiles, he says: "At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers; . . . . but now . . . . ye . . . . are made nigh by the blood of Christ." This means that by God's grace the middle wall of partition has been broken down, and that the new creatures in Christ are made sharers of those spiritual blessings and opportunities first offered to fleshly Israel. Indeed, that we get the choicest portion of blessing proffered to fleshly Israel is clearly stated by the same writer. (Rom. 11:17-24) He describes our relationship to the promises under the illustration of an olive tree, whose natural branches have been broken off, and into which wild olive branches have been grafted, and whose natural branches may yet later be reëngrafted. The Gospel church, as the engrafted branches, are partaking of all the fat and richness of the root—the Abrahamic promise. Evidently, then, these engrafted branches constitute spiritual Israel.

Besides, have we not on a higher or spiritual plane all that Israel after the flesh ever had? They came under a covenant with God—the Law Covenant sealed with the blood of bulls and goats: we come into covenant relationship to God under the New Covenant* sealed with the precious blood of Christ. They had a mediator between God and them—Moses: we have a better "Mediator between God and men—the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all." They had typical sacrifices for sins: we have the "better sacrifices"—the real, efficacious sin-offering. They had a priesthood under a high priest, and holy places made with hands, with their vails, candlestick, table of shew bread and a golden altar and incense and a mercy seat: we have the realities therein typified; for the fullness is of Christ (Head and body), the antitypical "Israel of God," the "royal priesthood," the promised seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We might multiply such proofs which clearly identify the true church as the higher or spiritual Israel, but more is unnecessary. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear!

* See June 15, 1919, issue, for critical examination of New Covenant.

RENEWED DEVOTEDNESS

Come, let us anew our journey pursue,
Roll round with the year,
And never stand still till the Master appear.
His adorable will let us gladly fulfill,
And our talents improve,
By the patience of hope, and the labor of love.

Our life, as a dream, our time, as a stream
Glides swiftly away,
And the fugitive moments we would not delay.
Haste, haste ye along, dark moments be gone,
For the Jubilee year
Rushes on to our view, and its dawn is now here.

O at close of our day may each of us say,
"I have fought my way through;
I have finished the work thou didst give me to do!"
O that each from his Lord may receive the glad word,
"Well and faithfully done!
Enter into my joy, and sit down on my throne!"

—*Charles Wesley.*

THE STANDPOINT OF THE FUTURE

"Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off."—Isa. 33:17.

It is always the part of wisdom to regard the present from the standpoint of the future, and to regulate the conduct of the present with a view to worthy future possibilities. Any other conception of life, or any other course in life, is unworthy of the dignity of man and dishonoring to his Maker who endowed him with those mental qualities of reason and judgment which, if used, place him far above the plane of a mere animal life of present gratification. The beasts that perish may indeed properly live for the present only, but not so man who was created in the image of God, and with the possibilities of eternal life and everlasting bliss before him. Howbeit, though that image was marred by the fall, yet, having been redeemed from the fall, the full restoration of that image is made possible by the assistance of divine grace; and it is only in the endeavor, in harmony with the divine directions, to regain that image, by daily overcoming sin, that true manhood can be reässerted and maintained. Otherwise, if any man persist in ignoring the future possibilities of worthy manhood, and, like the beasts that perish, live only for present gratification, then, like the beasts, he too will be esteemed of God unworthy of eternal existence, and must die. This verdict, however, will not be passed upon any until divine love and mercy and discipline have utterly failed to impress upon the heart a true sense of the dignity of manhood, and the obligation of honoring God in rising to that dignity by his assisting grace.

But here the question arises, How far into the future shall we look to find the standpoint from which to view and properly estimate the things of the present? That, we answer, must depend upon circumstances. In some instances we need to look only an instant ahead; while in others a week, or a year, or a few years, as indicated by the time necessary to develop the project. In infancy we learn by experience to look just a short distance ahead, reasoning that it is best not to put the hand into the fire, because the fire will surely burn again, as it did yesterday; that this or that disobedience will bring the censure of parents or teachers, while the opposite will bring approval; and by and by childish plans are formed and carried forward with a view to anticipated results in the near future. In maturer years wider plans are formed with a view to desirable results a few years hence; as, for instance, plans for fame, or fortune, or for the good of others—the training up of children to noble manhood and womanhood, etc.

In all this there is a measure of wisdom; but the man whose thought and planning, either for himself or others, is based upon the standpoint of the future of this life only, is not a wise man in God's estimation, however wise he may appear in the eyes of his fellowmen; as it is written, "The wisdom of this world is foolishness with God." (1 Cor. 3:19) It is not, therefore, the standpoint of the future of this life only that should be a criterion of present valuation with those who would be truly wise, but the standpoint of a possible destiny in the life which is to come, and which may be eternal if we so wisely and prudently conduct ourselves as to prove worthy of eternal life. It is to the future standpoint of a possible eternal life and blessedness and to the glorious consummation of the divine plan, that the Scriptures invite the attention of all the people of God. We are shown that God has a wise and benevolent plan for all his creatures, both in heaven and in earth; that the plan is wide and deep, requiring ages for its fulfilment; that the victory of that plan is assured; that it will culminate in that glorious victory at the end of Christ's Millennial reign; and that its victory will be the victory of truth and righteousness.

The truly wise man is the man who takes all this into account, accepting by faith all of the divine revelation concerning it, who, in this faith, makes and pursues all his plans, both for himself and others, with the ends of ultimate victory and eternal life in view; and who therefore seeks daily to become more and more established and confirmed in righteousness.

Such a man the Prophet Isaiah describes as one that "walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly; that despiseth the gain of oppression [refusing to be profited by any unrighteous scheme]; that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes [that cannot, by any consideration, be bribed to do evil], that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood [from any scheme of oppression that would cause a brother's blood to cry unto God for vengeance], and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil [from beholding evil approvingly, or with quiet acquiescence]."—Isa. 33:15.

Such a course of conduct is one squared by those principles of truth and righteousness to which ultimate victory is assured through Christ, whose reign of righteousness will fully establish them in the earth, so that the will of God will then be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Such a man, the prophet further assures us, is fireproof even in this day of trial, when the fire is trying every man's work of what sort it is. He shall dwell in the midst of the devouring fire and the lasting burnings of this day of wrath, which shall burn until all opposition to God and his righteous way is consumed. (Isa. 33:14) And not only shall these, like the three Hebrews in the fiery furnace, come out of the flames without even the smell of fire upon them, but they shall come out of every such fiery trial triumphantly. "He shall dwell on high [in the place of divine favor]: his place of defense shall be the strongholds of rocks [in the Rock of Ages]: bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure;" for "no good thing will God withhold from them that walk uprightly," even in this present life while they tread this valley of humiliation and vale of tears.—Vs. 16; Psa. 84:11.

It is to these also that the words of our text are addressed: "Thine eyes shall see the king in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off." "The land that is very far off" is not visible to the natural eye; but to the eye of faith, looking through the telescope of God's Word, it is a glorious vision. There is the King in his beauty reigning in power and great glory, and with him all his elect, crowned at his side. There is the happy condition brought about by the victory of truth and righteousness, when all tears are wiped away. There the will of God is done on earth as it is done in heaven, and peace and everlasting joy are upon all heads. There the hitherto desert earth blossoms as the rose; for there is no more curse. And there the lion and the lamb shall lie down together, and a little child shall lead them; and there shall be nothing to hurt nor to offend in all that holy kingdom.—Isa. 11:9.

Oh, what a vision of rest and peace, of glory and blessing, of joyful fellowship, of deathless love, of unsullied purity and unending bliss! Who, but those who have caught a glimpse of its glory, can estimate its power to inspire to holy zeal, to earnest endeavor, and to patient endurance of all the losses and crosses of the path of discipline that leads to it? It is no matter of surprise that not all who name the name of Christ are filled with the inspiration of this blessed vision; for but few, even of those who theoretically know these things, really behold the vision, and by faith realize that they have a place in it. Only those who do the will of God can thus know of the doctrine—as a guide and inspiration to the perfecting of holiness in the fear of the Lord. Only such can really see afar off with a realizing sense that what God hath spoken he is abundantly able also to perform. Only such can have the inspiration of such a faith. If thou art a faithful doer of the Word of God, and not a hearer only, then, even now "thine eyes" of faith shall catch the inspiration of the glory to be revealed, and thy steps shall be quickened in the paths of righteousness.

The Apostle Peter reïterates the same truth in a negative form, when, after enumerating the virtues of the truly righteous character, he adds,—"but he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off." (2 Pet. 1:8) That is, he cannot see them as an inspiring and impelling power, though he may know of them theoretically, and hold the truth even in unrighteousness. (Rom. 1:18) It is only those who truly love righteousness, and whose daily walk and conversation are therefore in harmony with the principles of righteousness, who can be in any measure inspired with the vision of faith of the ultimate victory of truth and righteousness and its firm establishment in all the earth. Who is so blind to the glories of righteousness as the man who is out of harmony with any of its principles? Can he who glories in oppression rejoice in the assurance that "the oppressor shall cease," and that the gain of oppression shall perish? Can he who despises the truth rejoice in the promise that the knowledge of the truth shall fill the whole earth as the waters cover the sea? Can he who hates his brother rejoice in the assurance that none shall have eternal life save those in whose hearts is written the law of love? No; to thus by faith behold afar off the blessed land of rest and peace, all radiant with the glory of the King in his beauty (Rev. 21:11, 23-25; 22:4, 5), the heart must be in sympathy with that glory and that beauty of holiness. No matter how much we may know about it, we cannot thus see it, unless, as both the prophet and the apostle assure us, we are lovers of righteousness—doers of the word, and not hearers only.

There is a note of solemn warning in these words of the Apostle, which all would do well to carefully consider; for not only does he affirm that the one lacking righteousness cannot see afar off, but he further states that he is blind—blind even to things near as well as afar off. A little reflection will show how very true this is; for there is a philosophy in the course of life which constantly tends either toward ultimate perfection, or toward ultimate degradation and ruin, according as the ways of righteousness or sin are pursued. The two principles, good and evil, tend to exactly opposite results, and their opposite fruits mature on the philosophical principles of cause and effect. Consequently, as the Apostle declares, only a blind man—a man mentally blinded or deceived so that he cannot perceive the fruits that must inevitably result from his course—could expect ultimate good results from an evil course of life. Such a one is blinded by his prejudices and preferences: his judgment is warped so that he cannot see ultimate results, being infatuated with the present gratification of his desires.

Let all who now see the King in his beauty and the land that is afar off continue to feast their eyes on the glorious vision, that they may catch more and more of its blessed inspiration, and let our treasure and our hearts be there. And let us guard carefully against any perversity of will which would so pervert the judgment as to hinder us from continuing to see afar off, and so blind us both to present and eternal interests.

MRS. M. F. RUSSELL.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

JAN. 10.—Acts 2:1-13.

"They were all filled with the Holy Spirit."—Acts 2:4.

Our last lesson contained a promise of the holy Spirit, the "Comforter," and instructed the apostles and believing brethren to tarry at Jerusalem until thus endued with power from on high for the work of the ministry, in harmony with the Lord's commission, to preach the gospel to every creature. In that lesson we noted the methods adopted by our Lord to prove to the disciples his resurrection and the change from human to spirit nature, and his ascension to the Father, in harmony with his declaration that he would go into a far country to be invested with his kingly authority, and would come again and receive his faithful ones unto himself. Some have endeavored to make of this Pentecostal outpouring of the holy Spirit upon the Church a fulfilment of the Lord's promise to "come again." But nothing could be further from the meaning of the Lord's words and from the expectations of the apostles, as can be readily proved. While telling them that he would come again and receive them unto himself, he also told them that in the interim of his absence they were to preach the gospel to all the world, for a witness, before the end of this age. He assured them that during this interim of his absence they would suffer persecution and be despised of all men for his sake; that they were incompetent for so great a work, and therefore must not begin it until they would be endued "with power from on high"—the promise of the Father, the evidence of the Father's acceptance, the foretaste of his blessing, which shall be completed and fulfilled on the glorification of the church in the Kingdom. (Rom. 8:23) The Lord did not represent that the holy Spirit would be himself, but merely a power or influence emanating from the Father and from himself.—Acts. 1:4, 5.

None of the apostles had the idea that the holy spirit was the Lord, nor that its outpouring represented the second advent. Quite to the contrary, they spoke of this outpouring as being only the "earnest" or "first fruits" of the spirit, a divine blessing upon the church. The Apostle Peter in preaching under the power of the holy Spirit, after declaring the death and resurrection of Christ, said, "Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the holy Spirit, he hath shed forth *this*, which ye now see and hear." (Acts 2:33) There is no intimation here that "*this*" outpouring of the Spirit was the second coming of the Lord; but to the contrary it is stated that the Lord at the time was highly exalted, with the Father, and had shed forth this Spirit or power upon his church; having received authority of the Father to shed it forth, by virtue of the atonement which he had accomplished by the sacrifice of himself.

There could not be better proof that the apostles did not understand the outpouring of the holy Spirit to be the second coming of Christ, the establishment of his Kingdom, etc., than the fact that speaking under the influence of this miraculous power, they continually and repeatedly exhorted the church to wait for and to expect still greater blessings at the Lord's return, assuring them that what they had already received was but a foretaste. Not merely one of the apostles so points forward to the second coming of Christ, but all of them without exception—Paul, Peter, James, Jude and John in their most earnest exhortations point to the second advent of the Lord as the greatest hope and inspiration for faith, courage, patient endurance and hope, for the things that shall be brought unto us at the revelation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Those expositors of Scripture, therefore, who endeavor to turn the attention of God's people from the hopes set before us in the gospel, of the "glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," so as to induce them to believe that our Lord's second advent took place at Pentecost, are guilty of gross perversion of the Word of God. And from the abundance of the testimony against such a view and the absence of all testimony in its favor, it seems difficult to see how their course can be anything short of a wilful "wresting of the Scriptures."

And in view of the fact that some of those who thus pervert the divine Word, so as to make its testimony of none effect through their traditions and false theories, are seemingly earnest people, it behooves all who would not be blinded to rid their minds of everything in the way of prejudice in coming to the Word of the Lord; that we may see light in his light and not confuse ourselves by our own or other men's darkness. How strange it would be indeed for the Apostle John in his great vision (Revelation), nearly sixty years after this Pentecostal blessing, to be shown and to be commanded to record for our information, symbolic pictures of the events of this Gospel age, and of its close, and of the second coming of Christ, and of the Millennial judgment, and of the final destruction of Satan and evil, and of the introduction of the everlasting Kingdom beyond—how strange and inconsistent all this would be if our Lord's second advent took place sixty years before, and the beloved disciple John, although blessed by the holy Spirit and especially inspired to be an instructor of the church, were left in total ignorance of the truth and inspired to pray, "Come, Lord Jesus;" Come quickly!

(2) It is not said that the holy Spirit came as a rushing wind, but merely that a sound came, as of a rushing mighty wind. A wind is an *invisible power*, and so is the holy spirit an *invisible power*. The choice, therefore, of a sound of wind as a symbol of the holy spirit, and as a means for drawing the attention of the apostles to the wonderful blessing coming upon them, was an apt one. We cannot think what would have better represented the invisible power with which they were imbued. The word "spirit" is from the very same Greek and Hebrew words as the words "breath" and "wind:" not that the holy Spirit is merely breath or wind, but that nothing else so well symbolises God's *invisible power*.

(3-11) The cloven tongues, that is, the split or parted tongues of light, like fire, which sat upon each of them, were also evidently symbolic, representing illumination,—the intelligence which comes through the holy Spirit. The holy Spirit might have come upon them with equal power without either the sound of rushing wind or the tongues of light; but these accessories were no doubt intended to help the church to grasp the situation, to expect and to appreciate the blessing then conferred and to make the matter the more notable and satisfactory to them.

The number of believers who were together in the upper room at the time of the outpouring of the holy Spirit was about one hundred and twenty. They were all immersed in the holy spirit, because the holy Spirit filled the house. But whether or not the tongues of light rested upon any others than the apostles we cannot surely know. It may have rested upon them only, by way of distinguishing them as mouthpieces of the holy Spirit. Certain it is that in the subsequent preaching with various tongues there seems good reason for supposing that the apostles only preached; because it was said of the speakers, "Are not all these which speak Galileans?" We cannot suppose that the entire company of one hundred and twenty were all Galileans. It is quite probable, indeed, that the majority of them were Judeans; but the eleven apostles were all from Galilee, and hence it is probable that they alone did the preaching; and probable also that they alone had the manifestations of the tongues of light in the upper room.

The number of Israelites, otherwise called Jews, residing

in the surrounding nations "dispersed amongst the Gentiles," where they were engaged in business, was much greater than the number who permanently resided in Palestine. Yet there was amongst them a reverence for the Holy Land and the law; and the latter commanded an assembling, at least representatively, at the Passover or at Pentecost. In consequence great numbers came to Jerusalem from the surrounding countries as representatives of families and communities to bear tithes and to offer prayers and sacrifices at the temple, on these occasions. "From a census taken in the time of Nero, more than 2,700,000 were gathered at the Passover, and still greater numbers came to Pentecost." The larger numbers in attendance at Pentecost was doubtless because this feast came in the Summer. These gathered multitudes were not drawn from idle curiosity, but were "devout men."

The countries from which many of them came are mentioned, and include a radius of several hundred miles and the most enlightened portions of the world at that time. Although Greek was the ruling language of that period in official matters and amongst the learned, the majority of the people evidently understood little more than their native tongues and dialects, nor did the character of the worship at Jerusalem make it necessary that they should be very fluent in one language. They came together to worship and to present offerings rather than to hear preaching. Yet doubtless the Lord's arrangement through Moses with reference to this feast had in view the very opportunities for publishing the good tidings recorded in this lesson. The miracle of speaking various tongues was appreciated by some at least of these representatives of true religion throughout the world. And the testimony of the apostles heard there was no doubt carried to every quarter; if not in sufficient power to convert to Christ, at least in sufficient measure to prepare the way in some degree for the message which was to be carried throughout the world by the apostles and believers in general who subsequently, as a result of persecution in Jerusalem, were scattered also and "went everywhere" preaching the gospel.

(12, 13) Although the people mentioned were religious, "devout men," it does not appear that the miracle of the apostles speaking in various languages did more at first than to excite curiosity in some, while with others it was attributed to an evil influence—intoxication. Thus Satan, who endeavored to calumniate our Lord as a "wine bibber" and possessed of Beelzebub, the prince of demons, would now fain hinder the people from hearing the message of the Gospel preached with the power of the holy Spirit sent down from heaven, and accompanied with wonderful manifestations. Then as now God's people were traduced by "devout men."

PENTECOSTAL PREACHING

JAN. 17.—Acts 2:32-47.

"The promise is unto you, and unto your children, and to all that are afar off."—Acts 2:39.

The major portion of the New Testament consists of written addresses to the Lord's people, and each Epistle shows great order and ability in presenting truth logically and forcefully. The Book of Acts, however, contains records of several preached discourses, amongst which none are more interesting than the one now before us for consideration.

Apparently the eleven apostles had been talking to little groups of people, here and there, as they came together after hearing of the miraculous manifestation of divine power in connection with the Pentecostal blessing. Whether the apostles spoke each in a distinctly separate dialect and were heard by different groups of different tongues, or whether they spoke in one tongue and were miraculously heard and understood in different tongues by their different hearers we are not informed, but the miracle would be about equally great either way, and the result the same. After being charged with intoxication Peter seems to have become the main spokesman and "lifted up his voice," and thus changed the matter from private conversations by a number to a public discourse by himself. He protested, not indignantly but mildly, against the charge of drunkenness, in very reasonable and logical form; showing that it was too early in the morning to suppose the apostles to be drunken. The third hour would be what we term nine o'clock, a. m., and would imply that the disciples had met quite early in the upper room, and that after the blessing they immediately improved the opportunity for letting the light shine out by preaching the truth to the curious.

Peter immediately connected the outpouring of the holy spirit with the prophecy of Joel, and connected this with our Lord and his crucifixion and the prophecies concerning him, pointing to his resurrection.—Acts 2:15-32.

(32, 33) After thus laying before them the basis of the Gospel, the death of Christ, he most forcefully announces that himself and all of the apostles were witnesses of the fact that our Lord Jesus was not left in death, but the Father had raised him up to life and exalted him to his own right hand. Upon this, the only proper foundation of gospel hope and preaching, the Apostle proceeded to build the discourse of this lesson and to account to the people for the power of the holy spirit which they saw manifested.

(34, 35) Realizing that his hearers did not understand the prophecy which he had just quoted from the Psalms (Psa. 16:8), Peter proceeded to prove to them that David could not have been speaking these words respecting himself; but that his words were an inspired prophecy respecting the resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the dead. In proof of this he called their attention to what they would all very readily admit; namely, that David was dead and in his sepulcher; that David was not risen; that David had not been exalted and made to sit at God's right hand; and that consequently someone else than David must have been meant; and he proceeded to show that Messiah was referred to by the prophet.

Very many Christian people are surprised when first they notice this positive statement by the Apostle, that the beloved Prophet David is not in heaven: so used are they to thinking of all the prophets as being now in heaven, instead of remembering as is clearly pointed out in Heb. 11:39, 40, "that they without us should not be made perfect"—that the ancient worthies will not receive the blessings which God has provided for them, and intends to bestow upon them, until first the Church, the bride, the body of Christ, has been perfected with her Lord at his second advent.

The character of this discourse by the Apostle Peter is not only worthy of notice and remembrance, but worthy of imitation, by all who would preach the true gospel with power. His discourse was not to the effect that this manifestation of power was the second coming of Christ and the establishment of his Kingdom and glory; but to the very contrary of this he shows from David's prophecy that Jehovah said to Christ, David's Lord and Master, "Sit thou on my right hand [that is, occupy the chief place of my favor and power] until I make thy foes thy footstool." This implies that the heavenly Father has engaged to honor the Son and to bring all things into subjection to him. In his discourse the Apostle does not intimate that this has already been accomplished and that all foes are overthrown, but merely that the first step in this programme has been accomplished; that Christ had suffered, that Christ had been raised from the dead, that Christ had been exalted to the right hand of power. This he emphasizes by saying, "Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Messiah." Peter's discourse was not about the stars, nor about the leaves, nor about politics, nor about finances, nor about eternal torment; but about the great central features of the gospel, that Messiah had come, had suffered the just for the unjust, and had been glorified and was yet to be recognized Lord of all. Nor did he fail to point out the responsibilities of the Jews before him, as a part of the nation, for the death of Christ.

(37-41) The effect of this preaching, on a right theme and in a direct and forceful manner, was the conviction of some of his hearers that if these things were true they were under a responsibility, and an inquiry as to what should be their course. We look with intense interest to see whether or not the Apostle advised them, as some preachers of today would advise—that they come to a mourners' bench and pray and agonize and cry aloud to the Lord to receive them, while he and the apostles gather around them and sing hymns and pray also for them. We find nothing of this kind, nor do we find the Apostle losing his senses and his argument and logic in excited declamation without meaning, intended to terrify the repentant ones. On the contrary, he proceeds in the same earnest, logical manner as before to answer their questions and to *inform them*, not that they need to urge God to forgive them, but on the contrary, that God has already provided forgiveness in Christ and is waiting and ready to receive them, and that the proper steps for them

to take are (1) repentance, reformation of life, "the turning over of a new leaf," and (2) that as repentant believers they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ—thus consecrating themselves to him and to his service, and outwardly and publicly acknowledging the same. And he assures them that upon so doing they shall receive the gift of the holy Spirit also. He points out that the promise of the holy Spirit included them (as Israelites), and that the Lord had specially called them, through the hearing and understanding of the truth, that they might become heirs of these promises and recipients of this seal of acceptance.

The astounding fact that three thousand were converted to the Lord, as the result of the Apostle's clear presentation of the simple facts and how they fitted to the prophecies, is not to be accounted for by supposing that the holy Spirit operated upon the hearers as well as upon the speaker; for the holy spirit is never given to any except consecrated *believers*. Nor are we to suppose that the Apostle spoke with such an intensity of power as would of itself have produced such results upon any congregation of hearers. The explanation lies in the fact that his hearers were specially "devout men," and the work of that day and of a succeeding period was merely the gathering of the ripe grains of "wheat" from that nation, which had for over sixteen centuries been the recipients of Divine favor with "much advantage every way, chiefly in that to them were committed the oracles of God." The same Apostle and the other apostles under the power of the same holy spirit and with probably increased natural ability in the handling of the Sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, did not subsequently succeed in accomplishing similar results so far as numbers were concerned.

It is worthy of note also that the holy Spirit's method was not to send the apostles, when imbued with power, off to heathen lands to preach to those who had never heard of God; but, on the contrary, divine providence so ordered matters as to gather some of the most worthy Jews out of every nation under heaven to the apostles, for the purpose of hearing and being blessed with the truth. These "strangers" from various parts were all Jews, although their language differed because born in foreign parts; furthermore, it was not until about three and one-half years after this that the Lord sent the good tidings beyond the Jews to the Gentiles—Cornelius being the first Gentile convert.

So we hold that the present harvest message is now sent primarily to the "devout" of Christendom: and we therefore seek and use the means provided for preaching to these *first*, "for the perfecting of the saints" rather than neglect this work by going after those who can and will be so much more successfully reached in the Millennium, by the glorified church—the seed of Abraham in which all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

(42-47) We cannot wonder that such a group of consecrated children of God, after being illuminated with the holy Spirit of promise, felt an instinctive desire to be in each other's company; nor can we wonder at the unselfish, loving spirit manifested in the arrangement that they should have "all things in common." No, such a course is only what would suggest itself to all true Christians as a desirable one. Their zeal toward God is also attested by their application to the study of the doctrines of Christ, their daily prayers, etc. And this, as verse 47 informs us, resulted in attracting others of kindred spirit to the truth. Thus the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved,—such as were in a condition to be saved from the blindness of their nation (Compare Rom. 11:25, 26); such as were the "wheat," ready to be separated from the "chaff" and gathered into the "garner" of the Gospel age, and away from the "fire" of trouble that presently came upon all the "chaff" of that nation.—Luke 3:16, 17.

Although the Lord specially blessed this communistic arrangement in the beginning of the Gospel age, it was, we believe, for the purpose of drawing to the truth the unselfish lovers of righteousness and peace. For the same reason he blessed the church at that time with peace, and with "favor with all the people." After the communistic arrangement and the favor with the people had been permitted for a time, and had accomplished their work, of gathering certain characters to the church, the Lord broke up the arrangement entirely, and scattered the church through persecution and disfavor with the people "everywhere." Nor do we believe that it was ever the intention of the Lord that his people should live in a communal manner during this Gospel dispensation. But on this subject we refer the reader to an article in our issue of Sept. 1, '95, entitled, "They Had All Things in Common."

ENCOURAGING LETTERS

We publish the following as an evidence of the fact that the Lord is pleased occasionally to grant physical healing, probably as an indication of the approach of the "times of restitution." (Acts 3:19-21) The sister does not mention the tenor of her prayer; but anticipating queries we would refer inquirers to the articles on prayer and faith healing in our issues of July 1 to Sept. 1, and suggest further that if in her place the strongest prayer we could offer consistent with our consecration of *all* to the Lord, would be—to tell the Lord (1) of our unbounded confidence in his *ability* to heal, if he saw best so to do; (2) of our desire to have his will done whether it be for our life or death, our sickness or health; (3) of our earnest desire to serve him, and our determination to use *whatever* strength and health and ability he saw best to grant in his service—as called out of darkness into his marvelous light. (4) There we would rest the case—

"Content, whatever lot I see,
Since 'tis my God that leadeth me."

Indiana.

DEAR FRIENDS:—I have been in the valley of the shadow of death, and my restoration to life and health is thought by many to be little if anything short of a miracle. Having been crippled for over thirty years by spinal and sciatic rheumatism, I had no hope of ever recovering and was resigned to the Lord's will. In January, '94, I fell on the ice, resulting in concussion of the spine and fracture of the hip joint, breaking two principal bones. For three months I was unable to move a finger. Friends sent me three of the best surgeons they could find, and all three agreed that it was useless even to prescribe for me, that recovery was impossible. Finally, when all looked for me to die at any instant, a poor old colored friend, a Christian woman, said to me, "You never tried Doctor Jesus. He can cure you. Now pray with me, and rejoice; for we will be heard." So we prayed, and soon I noticed an improvement. Today I am not only better in health, but I can walk better than in thirty years, and all traces of my old infirmity are gone.

While I lay helpless, I thought how I would try to lead others to the light. I had often thought to devote my time and labor to the Lord and his kingdom work, and am longing to do so now, if it be his will. I thought of your tracts, and especially of "Do You Know." I have delayed too long now, God forgive me this sin. I can offer something on "Good Hopes," as the Lord has sent me a pension. The time is at hand, the Kingdom is at the door. O may I be found worthy to work for it, and to enter into its glory, is the prayer of

Your friend and servant in the Lord,

MRS. E. S. L———.

The following letter is from a "Quakeress," or "Friend," who had long followed the Lord according to the light possessed, but failed to recognize him as having "bought us" by the sacrifice of himself. Thank God, she has found the only "door," the only "way" to God, and has entered as a true sheep into the fold of the true Shepherd. Alas! how many excellent moral people, blinded by the Adversary, fail to find the only gate to the true "narrow way." Thank God! the hour is near when all the blinded ones, who are now feeling after God, shall have the eyes of their understandings opened and shall find the "way." (Compare Acts 17:25-27; Isa. 29:18; 42:16) But what shall we say to comfort or encourage those whose eyes have seen the love of God and of Christ, manifested in the "*ransom* for all," and whom the love of Christ has not constrained to love in return nor to be his disciples? Ah! theirs is a much more serious case; and we know of nothing in God's Word for their encouragement, except it be the suggestion of beating with "many stripes," which may be understood to signify some hope of a blessing through tribulation, if then properly exercised by it.

There is a good suggestion in the letter for some, respecting the propriety and necessity of definitely accepting the Lord by faith, and of making a positive covenant with him upon the only terms,—*full*, free, unreserved, joyful self-surrender, as preceding the evidences of *full* acceptance.

Pennsylvania.

DEAR FRIEND:—Just a word to thank you for your letter and prayer, which has not been altogether without answer,

and for the WATCH TOWER, which came two or three days ago.

I think my error has been that I have taken the right of sonship too much as a matter of course, instead of realizing that the disobedient child is not in the true sense a child of God. From the condition of disobedience Jesus has purchased me at the heaviest possible cost, and I have been enjoying the redemption or the purchased blessings without rendering to him due gratitude in return. I have not taken him into account as I ought.

By degrees it came to me that a definite act of faith was required of me. I must cast myself unreservedly, without doubt or fear, upon Jesus Christ as a Saviour, and trust him for righteousness. I winced at the thought of such a complete surrender; but, when Jesus bent to ask me to give him my heart "once for all" and "now," I found there was no escape, I was already a captive; and that the sweetest possibility in all the world would be to be his "prisoner," "bond-servant," subject, slave only to follow and serve him henceforth; relying upon him alone for ability to do so.

And so "once for all" with Bunyan's Pilgrim I have dropped my burden at the foot of the cross. Now I go to my comparatively neglected Bible having given myself once for all to a neglected Saviour. And if to be baptized into Jesus Christ is to be baptized into his sufferings and death,* I will choose these in preference to any present health or exemption from trial, unless it be made very clear to me that I am to do otherwise. I believe that the redemption gives us health sufficient to do all that the Father expects of us, and I will not ask for more.

Very gratefully, ———.

[That is a good point to keep in memory: preservation of health and faculties is as truly to be esteemed providential as restoration when impaired; although not generally so esteemed. And afflictions (physical or financial) are sometimes blessings: One of old wrote, "Before I was afflicted I went astray." Another wrote, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him; for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth."

All of the saints, "sons," receive some chastisements: some in one way, some in another; some in ways that all can see, some in ways that none but themselves know: some learn the lessons slowly, and some more rapidly; but all have need of divine direction and correction. Unless disciplined and pruned they will not bear the fruits of the spirit in such profusion as the Master seeks; and unless fruitbearers they are cumberers of the Vine and will be "cut off."—EDITOR.]

* See Baptism and its Import; discussed in our issue June 15, '93.

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VIEW FROM THE TOWER

Tendencies already noted, toward a combination of religious sentiments in sympathy with "political reform" movements, are step by step making headway, preparing for the predicted politico-religious "confederacy." (Isa. 8:12) These give evidence of four things: (1) that the "*form* of godliness" and outward ceremony flourish as the Apostle predicted (2 Tim. 3:5); (2) that personal, vital godliness and clear appreciation of the divine mind are decreasing; (3) that the nominal church contains so much of the world and its spirit as to be ready for the move; (4) that the worldly, while unconverted in the true sense, are greatly influenced by respect, fear and public sentiment, and see no danger from the movement.

We are far from claiming, as many do, that our day is witnessing a general decline of moral and religious sentiment. On the contrary, we hold that these sentiments are more general perhaps than ever before, as witnessed by the philanthropies and charities of both public and private support, and the increase of humane and kindly sentiment. But we claim that while the civilized world is much brighter and better as a whole than it ever was, because of the diffusion therein of the Gospel light, yet the mass of the church, the light-bearers, are declining in intelligent faith and zeal and approaching the worldly standard about as fast as the world has been approaching the Christian standard, so that the world and the nominal church have again come close together;—closer than at any time before during the present century; so close that to many it appears that, to fully install the Millennium—the *triumphal reign* of the churches—only the three following "reforms" are needed, viz.—(1) Insert the names of God and Christ in the United States Constitution; (2) compel professing Christians to take a more active part in politics, form Good Citizenship Leagues, etc., and learn to outwit Satan at his own game; (3) by so doing obtain prestige and power enough to influence legislation to the enactment of stringent Sunday laws which would at least make us *look like a religious* people; also suppress the social evil and break up present "rings," or else convert them to the new religio-political program. Later on it will do to enforce religious worship and have the public servants attest their fidelity by attending in squads and in uniform. The appointing of *obligatory* fast days and thanksgiving days as is and has long been the case in countries thoroughly dominated by Roman Catholicism will follow later. The next step would be to suppress all literature antagonistic to this union; symbolically behead it (Rev. 20:4—like John the Baptist) for pointing out the wrong of the professed bride of Christ being united to the world. Then, later, when questions would arise as to *what* would constitute Christian worship, the Supreme Courts could be called upon to define more and more explicitly what is, and what is not, Christian faith and worship.

Such a reign of the churches will be but the counterpart to the reign of Papacy during the dark ages, except that it will be a more enlightened reign, from the fact that general civilization has progressed, and general intelligence will have some weight.

But that *reign* will be short. Worldliness, being merely covered with a thin outward veneer of religion, will speedily assert its true nature—selfishness, envy, malice, hatred and strife. But it will not be left thus to disintegrate: its fall will be sudden; it will be utterly disrupted by the "great earthquake" (Rev. 16:18), the revolt of the masses, precipitating the anarchy foretold in Scripture, in the midst of which the dominions of this world shall pass into the hands of the true Kingdom of God, when the true Millennial reign will begin.

The fact is that the faith of the church has always been the most pure and fervent when under opposition and even persecution from the world. There can be no ground for *union* between the church and the world except as the church wholly or in part loses sight of or abandons the divine program. Our Lord's example and precepts are applicable to all of his followers yet, and will continue to be so until the "present evil world" shall give place to "the world to come" and its Messianic kingdom. Our Lord declared, "Ye are *not of* the world. I have chosen you *out of* the world. Marvel not if the world *hate you*, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were *of the world*, the world would love its own."

The present effort to unite the church and the world more closely, like the successful efforts of the past, is only a trap and a snare by which the great Adversary would divert attention from the true work of the church—her self purification and *separation* from the world, by which her light would shine upon the world with greater clearness, convincing of sin, of righteousness and of a coming judgment.

But as in the past a falling away of the majority into worldliness served to *separate* the Lord's "jewels," so now such a separation is in progress. And it is for this "jewel" class that God is supplying the light of present truth;—clearer light on the "*ransom*" and its present and future results; on the "royal priesthood" and its present sacrificing and future glory; on Covenants and their fulfillment; on the Kingdom now in embryo suffering violence, and by and by in glory and power the blessing of all the families of the earth; on the fulfillment of prophecies which prove that we are in the "harvest" of this age, and that the great Reaper is *present*, "gathering together his elect," his jewels.

* * *

The champions of church and state have been rejoicing considerably over two incidents which they consider favorable to their cause,—

(1) A Supreme Court decision which, although indirect, can be, and no doubt later on will be, construed to signify that the United States Government is in some sense a religious, a Christian government, and become a basis for *Christian* laws and regulations, and not merely laws of Justice. All should know how many narrow meanings have been given to the term, "Christian regulation," by various well-meaning, but grossly deceived, parties in the past.

(2) President Cleveland in his last Thanksgiving-day Proclamation departed from all past usage by mentioning

in it the name of Christ, and what might be construed as partisan politics in the suggestion of thankfulness that the Silver Party had failed to carry the election. His example was followed by the governors of several states in their proclamations. There is nothing in the Constitution giving any *authority* for such proclamations: they are therefore merely *suggestions;* and in making the *suggestions* all previous presidents have wholly separated politics, and in consideration of the fact that millions of citizens (including Jews, infidels and skeptics) do not acknowledge Christ, have merely suggested that thanks be rendered to Almighty God for his blessings, etc. The framers of the national government were not devoid of religious sentiment, but they were logical when they said, "Who does not see that the same authority that can set up the Christian religion over all other religions, can with the same ease set up some particular sect of Christians in exclusion of all other sects?" Acting upon this thought, they sought to found a government of the people entirely free from religious bias, under which every citizen and stranger shall have liberty to worship God or not to worship him, according to his own conscience.

So intelligent a journal as the *Independent* proves the wisdom of the foregoing, for while defending President Cleveland's proclamation, it says,—

"Suppose the President had been a Roman Catholic and referred to the invocation of Mary as a mediatrix, he would have made a mistake, because the prevailing sentiment of the land would be against him."

The intimation is that so broadminded a man as the Editor of the *Independent* would be inclined to allow the majority to *rule* the minority, especially if he were on the side of the majority.

Indeed, the United States Constitution seems to us almost miraculous: we believe that God must have providentially guided in its preparation—so remarkably does it guard religious liberty even against the will of a majority; and that in a land where majorities rule in general matters.

Considerable opposition was aroused by these two evidences of religio-political combination, as well as considerable approval; but the masses of the people are apathetic and care little one way or the other, and do not see the danger. In answer to criticisms the Cleveland *Plain Dealer* seems to suggest an amendment to the Constitution, establishing rules (to be drafted by experts) for such occasions as Thanksgiving-day proclamations.

The Reform Bureau, commenting appreciatively on the proclamation, says:

"Thus at last we have a proclamation in accord with the Supreme Court dictum, 'This is a Christian nation.'"

Again, in the Washington *Evening Star*, the same Bureau says:

"The Thanksgiving proclamation is in this respect the first one that might not have been appropriately issued in China or among the Choctaws, or wherever a Supreme Being is recognized. This is the first proclamation in accord with the long list of historic facts on the basis of which the Supreme Court said, on Feb. 29, '92, in a unanimous opinion (Trinity church case): 'This is a Christian nation.' This proclamation, with the burial of the spoils system and the arbitration treaty, will make this administration distinguished in history above any other since the war."

"On the other side we quote from the *Chicago Israelite* as follows:

"Between undue sensitiveness and a just appreciation of insult and rightful apprehension of encroachments upon liberty, there are great differences. No one familiar with the systematized efforts of the numerous Christian organizations to obtain recognition of Christ in the Constitution; of the tendency of the decision of the United States Supreme Court, that this is a Christian nation; and of the natural results which must follow upon the arrest and conviction of Seventh-day Adventists in various states of the Union, can view with indifference President Cleveland's departure from the precedents of all the presidents who have gone before him. Mr. Cleveland has done what no previous president has ever dreamed of doing, what all have taken pains to avoid doing. . . . .

"There is an untiring effort being made to turn this country into a Christian state and to place on a footing of toleration only, all those who do not profess the Christian religion. The danger of the eventual success of this scheme is much greater than many are inclined to believe. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty, and it behooves every lover of freedom to be on his guard against its foes, and, more especially, against such an evident attack as is made in President Cleveland's message, whether it was intended or not.

"Those who close their eyes to the strength of the movement which has for its aim the Christianization of our country, and the consequent death blow to all of its boasted freedom, either know little of what is going on or sadly underestimate the number and influence of those engaged in this revolutionary and retrogressive movement. Ignorance and indifference only can account for the tendency to make little of President Cleveland's breach of the unwritten law which has hitherto been held sacred. . . . . Those who are inclined to underestimate the influence of his action will have a chance to estimate it at its true value when the jubilations of Christianizing elements have had time to make themselves heard. That they will be heard in tones unmistakably loud, only those who know nothing of the fight being made can doubt"

The desire to rule others and to compel obedience is very strong in some people. *The Christian Standard*, for instance, is urging a rigid religious observance of Thanksgiving Day, and would like to have all religious people oppose football and other recreative games on that day.

The Christian Endeavor Society wants to make its mark also, and proposes another *holy day*. It proposes to give to Washington's Birthday a "religious tone."

The *Christian Endeavorer* says:

"Many Christian Endeavor societies last year utilized Washington's Birthday for Christian Citizenship day. They found this plan to be helpful to the cause of Christian Citizenship. . . . .

"As Washington was distinctly a Christian citizen and showed his loyalty to his divine Master on every occasion, there is every reason why the celebration of his birthday should have a religious tone to it."

It says that about six hundred C. E. Societies will follow the plan this year. It is proposed to make it general at the next convention. It will not be long, probably, until those who hold aloof from these church and world combination schemes will be esteemed religious anarchists.

All this is of a piece with Rome's saint days, only modified to suit our times.

* * *

Advocating Sunday observance before the "Iowa Sabbath Rescue State Convention," Rev. E. L. Eaton gave the keynote of the present movement when he said,—

"We want to touch legislation; we want to go over yonder into that Capitol building and sit there among the law makers with as much serenity and with as much right as do the lobbyists of the great corporations. We want to put our finger on the moral pulse of the legislature until they feel the power of our influence to the extent that they dare not refuse our demands.

"He added that Catholics, Lutherans and all other Protestants could as brothers work together in a great cause that is worthy of their effort."

As usual, false doctrine, ignorance of and opposition to the divine plan expressed in the Word, lies at the foundation of these well-meant but really evil movements.

Let all who can read the signs of the times draw specially near to the Lord and his Word, and seek the more grace and wisdom to walk circumspectly and to labor while it is called day, before the night shall close our opportunities and indicate that the gathering of the elect is complete.

* * *

The "Evangelical Alliance" has taken a specially active part in Christian Union efforts of late. It is worth while remembering that in this association directly the union movement took its start in the formation of the "image," as marked in prophecy, in 1846 A. D. It is altogether probable that it will also play an important role in connection with its receiving "life."—Rev. 13:15.

* * *

A remarkable sensation was created in London recently, in connection with the public consecration of Rev. Dr. Temple as Archbishop of Canterbury, Primate of the Church of England, and next to the Queen the head of that church. As the ceremonies (which took place in the Church of Saint Mary Le Bow) commenced, the Rev. Edward Brownjohn of Bath arose and solemnly and earnestly protested against the consecration, "on the ground that Rev. Dr. Temple was a *confessed* believer in the full doctrine of Evolution, a doctrine incompatible not only with the Bible but also with the Book of Common Prayer and Articles of Religion of the Church of England."

The Queen's commissioners refused to entertain the protest of one man; and considering that they had the backing of practically the entire Church of England in favor of Evolution, and the Queen's choice of Primate, the ceremony proceeded. This was on Dec. 22, '96.

On Jan. 8 the Archbishop was *enthroned*, as the following dispatch describes:

"The mandate for the enthronement was presented by the vicar-general to the chapter of Canterbury, in the treasury. After this ceremony the chapter proceeded to the deanery and conducted the Archbishop to the great west door. The procession was then formed.

"The archbishop was attired in full archepiscopal robes, his long scarlet train being borne by two boys, king's scholars of the cathedral school. They wore, according to immemorial custom, surplices of pure white linen, yellow sandals and little purple caps.

"There was a dramatic incident as the archbishop was traversing the nave at the end of the procession. A voice shouted loudly: 'The whole proceedings are a fraud.' The interruption came from an elderly gentleman of clerical appearance. He was speedily and forcibly ejected amid considerable excitement.

"The order of installation was read in Latin, and the archbishop was conducted to the marble chair, accompanied by the archdeacons of Canterbury. The marble chair, known as the patriarchal throne, is said to have been used by St. Augustine, and in it during many centuries the archbishops of Canterbury have been enthroned.

"The new Archbishop of Canterbury is one of the most advanced Liberals among English churchmen. He is a professed advocate of Darwin's theory of evolution."

* * *

The reaction in the Church of England against Papacy is showing itself in an increased desire to form a Universal Protestant Organization. The Bishop of Salisbury at a public meeting recently said, of the Pope's recent deliverance which repudiated Anglican Orders and union,—

"It has *set us free* to do work which lies nearest hand, without so much regard to ulterior consequences. We are free to follow the path opened to us by a Divine Providence, and *to create an independent* world-wide communion." He suggests that the first step should be toward a union with Presbyterians.

TRAVELING BRETHREN ON TIME

When you get word that any of the "Pilgrim" brethren are coming to your vicinity at a particular date, you may expect them and prepare accordingly. Do not delay arrangements for meetings until their arrival; else there will be little time left for meetings; for rarely do they remain over two days at one place. The routes are arranged in the WATCH TOWER office, and the time apportioned according to circumstances and interest—sometimes but one day at a place. These "pilgrims" are not slothful, but fervent in spirit serving the Lord; so arrange for two or three meetings each day, as will suit *your* convenience. Improve such opportunities for having your friends and neighbors, whom you have been trying to interest by conversations and reading matter, hear a connected delineation of the Plan of the Ages from the Chart of the Ages. We commend to you as a privilege the entertainment of these brethren of whose coming we send you notification (Heb. 13:2; Rom. 12:4-18); but they do not take up collections, expenses being provided from the Tract Fund.

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

"He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him and will manifest myself to him. Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world? Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."—John 14:21-23.

In these words the people of God have set before them the blessed privilege of intimate communion and fellowship with our heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus, the privilege of a realization of the divine presence, of which the world cannot know, and which realized is an earnest of our inheritance with Christ beyond the vail of the flesh. If we be one with Christ here, his faithfulness is our assurance that nothing can separate us from him now or when we shall have finished our course and proved our faithfulness even unto death. "Who," says Paul, "shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For . . . . neither death, nor, life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."—Rom. 8:35-39.

This is the blessed assurance of faith that springs spontaneously from the realization of a present and vital union with Christ. Such fellowship and intimate communion should therefore be the longing desire of every child of God, whose prayer and constant attitude of heart should be:

"O God, this is my plea, *whate'er the process be,*
This love to know."

It is only in heart-to-heart fellowship that we become truly acquainted with another; and only so can we realize the depth and sweetness of divine love. But the conditions of this fellowship, the *process* by which we may come to really know him in whose favor is life, and his dear Son, our Redeemer and Lord, must not be overlooked. The conditions are that we have and keep the divine commandments. The having and keeping of the commandments, our obedience to the heavenly wisdom, constitute the proof of our love to God. Thus also is proved our love of righteousness; for the law of God is the law of righteousness, commending itself to the highest moral instincts of our nature. To the soul, therefore, that loves righteousness the commandments of the Lord are not grievous (1 John 5:3); for they are the expression of the most exalted virtue, the noblest benevolence, the purest love, and all the beauties of holiness.

In the inspired words of the Lord and the apostles and prophets we have the divine will expressed, explained, illustrated and enforced, line upon line and precept upon precept. And yet, with all this teaching, it is possible, even for the consecrated people of God, to be forgetful hearers and readers of the Word, so that its most explicit directions for daily living, its most faithful warnings against snares and besetments, and its most careful expositions of the principles of righteousness and truth, may avail little or nothing in the education and training of character. "Therefore," says the Apostle, "we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip; . . . . for . . . . how shall we escape [the wrath of God] if we *neglect* so great salvation"—the salvation which comes only through faith and obedience to the Word of the Lord diligently laid up in our hearts, and its principles carefully and prayerfully wrought out in our lives. (Heb. 2:1-3). The promise of the divine favor and blessing is not to the forgetful, listless hearers who fail to apply their hearts unto instruction, but to the attentive hearers and faithful doers of the Word.—James 1:25.

It is not enough, therefore, that we have read the Word of God and gained a general knowledge of its principles and precepts and the plan and purpose of our God: there is yet more, much more, to be learned and done. There must be a daily laying up of its treasures of wisdom and counsel in the heart, and the working out of its principles in the life. "Thy words were found, and I did *eat them*," said one of the saints of old; "and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." (Jer. 15:16) So must we also feed upon them in our hearts.

Moses, addressing the typical people of God, shows with what carefulness God would have all his people regard his testimonies, saying, "Ye shall lay up these my words in your heart and in your soul, and bind them for a sign upon your hand, that they may be as frontlets between your eyes. And ye shall teach them to your children, speaking of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt write them upon the doorposts of thine house and upon thy gates." (Deut. 11:18-20) Joshua also said to them, "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein."—Josh. 1:8.

Again we read (Prov. 7:1-3), "My son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee. Keep my commandments and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye. Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart."

It is those who thus carefully *lay up* the treasures of divine wisdom that they may in deed and in truth live by them, that truly keep the commandments of God. It is very manifest that our Lord would have us apply not only our heads, but also our hearts, to the instructions of his Word.

(Prov. 23:12) This implies the study of ourselves, as well as of the divine Word, that we may see just what portions of the Word apply to our individual present necessities. We know that as members of the fallen race we are all afflicted with the malady of sin; and though through faith in Christ, our Redeemer, we are freely forgiven and reckoned of God as free from sin, even this reckoned standing before God, through faith in Christ's merit applied to us, is accorded to us only in view of our hatred of sin, our love of righteousness, and our earnest heart-desire to be pure and holy. It would indeed be a vain thing to trust for eternal life in the imputed righteousness of Christ, and at the same time to love and continue in sin. If any of the world of mankind do so in the next age, they will never reach perfection and eternal life. Accepting first, the favor of redemption through Christ they must then *work out* their salvation by obedience and persevering effort to eradicate sin and put on righteousness. The same principle applies also to the church now on trial. We should ever bear in mind that justification through faith in Christ does not directly, and beyond all peradventure, insure to the believer eternal life; but it does secure that legal standing before God upon which believers, both of this age and the next, must *work out* their salvation with fear and trembling.—Phil. 2:12.

Having, by faith, accepted this legal standing before God, our subsequent course of life must make manifest our heart-desires to be cleansed from all sin: "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid;" for if we continue in sin, the grace of God will not abound; and if we give up the struggle against sin and allow it to take possession of our mortal bodies, the grace of God must eventually be withdrawn.

Sin is a disease inherited from our fallen progenitors: it affects one individual in one way and another in another: and even though, through faith in Christ, we are reckoned of God as free from sin, nevertheless the actual tendencies to sin are still present with us. Like the children of Israel, we are led into Canaan (the rest of faith and of the divine favor), but we have still a great work to do in the way of routing the enemies of righteousness long intrenched there; and for this work both persevering effort and divine grace are needed. While the precious blood of Christ applied by faith is the great atoning remedy for sin whereby we are justified to life, the only restorative remedies are in the law and testimonies of the Word of the Lord, all which would, however, be unavailing except as supplementary to the great atoning remedy; and these must be carefully and prayerfully sought out and applied with persevering effort for our cleansing and healing. To this end it is important also to remember that a correct diagnosis of our case is one of the first essentials to a cure. But who is sufficient for this?—"Who can understand his errors?" who is able to look into his own character and, without prejudice, to mark its defects? Surely none who are intoxicated with the spirit of the world, with pride, or selfishness, or vain glory.

It is for this reason that the Apostle Paul counsels sobriety and humility, saying, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think *soberly*."—Rom. 12:3.

A sober estimate of self is a humiliating, not an exalting, exercise; yet it is healthful and beneficial. It reminds us continually that we are "men of like passions" with other men, and thus enables us not only to strive against our own weaknesses and besetments, but also to sympathize with those of others, and to bear with them as we wish them to bear with us. It makes us continually to realize that our fallen nature gravitates toward sin, and that we must resolutely strive against it or else float with its downward current to destruction.

A sober estimate will remind us too of our mental infirmities; for, however favorably we may compare with some other members of the dying race about us, we are very imbecile as compared with human perfection. How slowly and laboriously does the mind act; how dull are the perceptive faculties; how inert the reasoning powers; how unskilled the judgment; how feebly we discern the great principles of truth, and how stupidly we go about applying them; how repeated are our blunders and failures, and how tedious and slow our progress! Surely no man, however favorably he may compare with some of his fellows, has anything whereof to boast in a *sober* estimate either of his mental or his moral capacity or development as compared with the standard of perfection.

In a sober estimate of character how painfully manifest are those overestimates of pride and vainglory which are due to the intoxicating spirit of the world! How unlovely it is, how absurd and ridiculous, how mean and contemptible, how vain and foolish! and how effectually it impedes progress toward actual perfection! No man can make commendable progress toward perfection in any direction who does not recognize his shortcomings. If we say we see, our blindness remains; if we say we are wise, our ignorance remains, and our folly is manifest to others while we glory in our shame. —Phil. 3:18, 19.

Such is the spirit of this world. It is blind to the highest interests and noblest ends of life; it intoxicates the mind and heart and sends the man staggering along the downward way to destruction, wise only in his own conceit. Against the intoxicating spirit of this world it is the duty of the Christian to set a vigilant guard. He has covenanted to live apart from the world with all its ambitions, pride and vainglory, and apart, too, from its selfishness, greed and strife. Let us, therefore, be sober and watch unto prayer; and let the burden of our prayer be: "Cleanse thou me from secret faults [show them to me, that I may put them far from me]. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me." "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."—Psa. 19:12-14; 139:23, 24.

We need to know and clearly recognize our errors if we would indeed be cleansed from every secret fault. If there be any secret fault in us, what though no human eye might detect it, if we are indeed lovers of righteousness we will want the cleansing power of the Word applied to take it away, remembering always that "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."—Heb. 4:13.

Yes, it is in the diagnosis of our case that we are most likely to err and it is here that sobriety of mind and meekness are so much needed. Self-love does not like to admit the faults that are in us, to particularize them and look them squarely in the face with the searchlight of God's Word clearly revealing them. It is much more conducive to complacent ease of mind to generalize and to overlook particulars; —to say Yes, I know I am not perfect, etc., etc. But it requires a great deal more of moral courage to say, Yes, I see now, in the light of God's Word, that I have been selfish, or unkind, or unfaithful to my obligations, or whatever the fault may be. It requires meekness, humility, to admit these things, even to one's self; and still more, to confess them to those who have been injured or grieved by them. Yet how necessary are the recognition and the confession—the proper diagnosis of the case—to the healing. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another," says the Apostle James, "that ye may be healed." (Jas. 5:16) The recognition and the confession, as well as the prayer, are thus seen to be very important in order that the heart may be in the proper attitude to receive an answer to the prayer.

Careful reflection will show at once how necessary to the cure is a correct diagnosis. For instance, suppose a case of extreme selfishness. For a time it moves along and prospers, and the disease grows worse and worse until, by and by, some of its bitter fruits begin to appear. Now if the patient fails to discern or admit the selfishness, he may regard the bitter fruits of it, not as the penalty for wrong-doing, but as sufferings for righteousness' sake. And with this incorrect diagnosis he may come to the Word of God and take away the wrong remedy. If he should go at all, he will probably look for words of consolation designed for those only who are truly suffering for righteousness' sake. And that will not help his selfishness, but will make it worse: he will go on cultivating the selfishness and take comfort in the promises that are not his; whereas, if he realized and admitted the selfishness, he would be considering the warnings against it and praying for grace to overcome it; he would be acknowledging it to those concerned, and endeavoring to make amends for it; and in so doing its bitter fruits would begin to wither, the peace of God would come into his heart, his heart would enlarge, and the love of God and of his fellow-men would begin to fill it.

This is what it means to keep the Lord's commandments and to apply our hearts unto instruction. It means, not self-gratification, but self-abnegation, and self-purification: it means that, in meekness and humility, we must deny ourselves, and take up our cross daily, and follow Christ. This is the narrow way; walk ye in it. There is no other way to life, and certainly no other way to the Kingdom, than the way of righteousness, humility and true holiness, and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose abundant merit, applied by faith, will make up for all our deficiencies that are not wilful. It is those who walk this narrow way that may even now enjoy the sweets of fellowship with the Father and our Lord

Jesus and with all who are led of the spirit of God.

Let as many, therefore, as would follow on to know the Lord, whom to know is life eternal, studiously apply their hearts unto instruction, and in meekness and humility receive the ingrafted word, and let it do its purifying work. Hear the exhortation, "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double-minded. . . . . Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up." —James 4:7-10.

Paul speaks of the great profit to the Corinthian church of their humble recognition of and godly sorrow for sin, saying, "Now I rejoice . . . . that ye sorrowed to repentance; . . . . for godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation; . . . . for behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you; yea, what clearing of yourselves; yea, what indignation; yea, what fear; yea, what vehement desire; yea, what zeal; yea, what revenge [against the evil]. In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter." (2 Cor. 7:9-11) Such are the results of sober self-examination in the spirit of meekness and prayer and with a view to cleansing our hearts and minds from all the defilements of sin, both small and great. O Lord, keep thy servants in the way of thy commandments, in meekness and soberness, and let the rich reward of divine fellowship be ours, both here and hereafter!

MRS. M. F. RUSSELL.

THE LAME MAN HEALED

JAN. 24.—Acts 3:1-16.

"His name, through faith in his name, hath made this man strong."

The stirring scenes of the day of Pentecost were past, and this lesson introduces us to another notable discourse by the Apostle Peter, delivered probably not long after the day of Pentecost in company with the Apostle John. They had gone up to the temple at the hour of prayer. The clear intimation is that the apostles were praying men and that under the leading of the holy spirit they were guided in their ministrations of the truths connected with the new dispensation to the praying Jews, "devout" people, rather than to the godless. And so it is with the true gospel ever since. There is a message or a call to repentance which is applicable to every member of the human family; but the special message of the gospel is not to the unregenerate, but to the repentant, to the forgiven, to the reconciled. The Jews who assembled to worship the Lord at the temple were of course not believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore were not justified by faith in his blood, but, under their Jewish covenant, the Law covenant, and by means of its typical sacrifices, they were up to this time typically justified as a people, and the grace of God was offered to them from that standpoint: they were not treated as strangers, aliens, foreigners, but as heirs of all the divine promises and blessings. And as a people the Jews continued to occupy this position for three and one-half years after our Lord's crucifixion and their national rejection. The Lord's favor according to promise continued with them individually until the full end of their "seventy weeks."*

(2, 3) At that time hospitals, homes for incurables, blind asylums, poor houses, etc., apparently were not thought of, and were not instituted as we have them today in civilized lands; nor are they yet institutions in the East. Thus public alms-giving was probably considered a duty. We might here remark that, in our judgment, the course adopted by civilized nations of taxing all property and wealth for the reasonable and comfortable support of the incapables of society is eminently proper, and should be so completely carried out as to make public begging unnecessary.

(4-7) Peter's statement would indicate that he at least was a very poor man. "Silver and gold have I *none*." Although he said, "Look on *us*," thus directing the cripple's attention to the Apostle John as well as to himself; yet, speaking of their financial condition, he does not say, "Silver and gold have *we* none." The fact is that there is good ground for supposing that the Apostle John had some property. We remember that our Lord with his dying words commended his mother to the care of John—possibly not merely because of his love for John and John's love for him, but also because John had some means wherewith to care for Mary. We remember furthermore that the account states that John took Mary "into his *own* home."—John 19:27.

The Apostle Peter seems to have exercised his individual gift in the healing of the cripple—"Such as I have give I thee." Nevertheless, it was not in his own name that the miracle was performed, but properly all credit was given to the Lord Jesus. This was evidently not a case of "prayer cure," for we have no record that the Apostles prayed over the man, nor that they anointed him with oil in the name of the Lord. It was on the contrary an exercise of "the *gift* of healing," which was then with the church for the purpose of introducing the apostles and the gospel which they preached.

Although fully conscious of the power of God operating through him to perform the miracle, Peter, apparently to assist the exercise of faith on the part of the cripple, stretched forth his hand and helped him to his feet; thus illustrating the propriety of acting according to our faith, and permitting the influence of our faith to reach others in a natural and helpful manner. This is our duty as children of God.

(8-10) It is very evident that the poor cripple was not an impostor, for such a one instead of leaping about and enjoying his blessing, and praising God, would have regretted any circumstance which would deprive him of the opportunity for preying upon the sympathies of the people in order to avoid working for a living.

(11, 12) We may reasonably suppose that the going of Peter at this particular time to the temple was of premeditation; we may suppose that he had been there frequently before; and that frequently before he as well as the others who attended at the temple had seen this same cripple. If Peter did not plan this particular visit and healing, we may reasonably suppose that the holy spirit planned and directed it for him. At all events the whole matter was very successful in that it drew the attention of the most devout, prayerful Jews to the Gospel of Christ. The Apostle Peter was quick to use any and every opportunity to tell the good tidings. He began by modestly assuring the people that it was nothing wonderful in John and himself that had produced the miracle, and that the man was not cured either by their holiness or by their power, but by the power of the risen Christ Jesus. It is worthy of note that although in addressing the man Peter exercised his own faith only, yet now in speaking of the matter he associates John with himself as a sharer in whatever honor might belong to them as the instruments of God. How unselfish and how beautiful! What a lesson is in this verse for all who attempt any service for the King of kings. How necessary that we should realize not only our own insufficiency and nothingness in connection with the work of God, but how proper that self should sink entirely out of our thoughts and the glory all be given to Him whose right it is.

(13-15) The apostle's discourse as narrated was a short one, but well directed and right to the point. Beginning with a statement by which his hearers would understand him to be also a devout Israelite, he proceeded directly to the point—Christ, a crucified and risen Saviour. Nor did he spare his hearers, but drove home the truth that the nation of Israel were the real crucifiers of God's dear Son, even when a Roman governor found no fault in him and desired to set him at liberty.

"Ye killed the Prince of life!" What a thought! They all realized themselves as death-condemned and dying creatures. They felt their need of life, eternal life, and had been praying for it and hoping that according to the divine promise it should come through Messiah, a Saviour—a Life-giver, and now they were almost staggered by the Apostle's words, "Ye killed the Prince of Life"—the Life-giver! It is presumed that our Lord and the Apostles spoke in the Syriac language; and in the Syriac version of the New Testament the word "Life-giver" is used where in the English the word "Saviour" occurs. The Apostle must have struck a very tender chord in the hopes and aspirations of these devout, prayerful Jews. We fancy them looking with incredulity, and saying within themselves, "Could it be possible that Jesus of Nazareth was indeed the Messiah, the Life-giver?"

(16) While they were yet wondering on the subject, the inspired Apostle quickly drew their attention to the evidences before them in the healing of the cripple, which attested the truth of his declaration that Jesus was no longer dead but risen. Here was just such a miracle as those which he a few months before had performed in their midst. It was another of Jesus' miracles; the apostles themselves performing it in his name and utterly disclaiming any ability to do such things themselves.

(17-21) Thus pointing them to the fact that Jesus was still a living, powerful, sympathetic and gracious Saviour,

* See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II, Chap. 3.

he urged them to repent, assuring them that it was God's purpose to send great blessings through Jesus and to send Jesus himself back again a second time: assuring them also that at his second coming there would be an abundance of such manifestations as these which they had just witnessed.

"Times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and he shall send Jesus Christ which before was preached unto you whom the heavens must receive [retain] until the times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began."

Note that the Apostle began by expressing confidence in the "fathers" and in Israel's hope, built upon Jehovah's promise to them. Note also that after connecting those promises and hopes with Christ and his sacrifice, and linking it with the cure of the cripple, he points them down to the Millennial age as the grand consummation-time for all the blessings, all the good things, which God had promised by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began. Is it any wonder that such testimony—both reasonable and comprehensible—delivered to such devout Israelites, drawn together by a desire to worship the Lord, resulted as it did, in the conversion of about five thousand? As in the case of those noted in our last lesson, these were the "wheat" of that Jewish age, which the Lord was gathering out preparatory to the blinding of all the remainder of that people for the period of the Gospel age, at the close of which their blindness will be turned away.—Rom. 11:25, 26.

"THEY HAD BEEN WITH JESUS"

JAN. 31.—Acts 4:1-14.

"There is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved."

As the apostles were preaching Christ, taking for their text the manifestation of his power through Peter in the healing of the impotent man at the temple gate "Beautiful," and while the devout worshipers heard them gladly and repentantly, the theologians were disturbed; it seemed monstrous to them that any but themselves should undertake to teach the people, and that the people were giving more interested attention to these "laymen" than they gave to them,—the chief priests, religious rulers and doctors of the law. In this they but manifested the usual worldly spirit, which in every religious system except the true one manifests special opposition to any light or teaching which does not emanate from those recognized as "ordained" teachers. True, these apostles were ordained by the very highest authority in the universe—the spirit and power of God, communicated by Christ; but such ordination, such authority to teach, was not recognized by those doctors of divinity who, like their successors to this day, failed to recognize the ordinations of God and merely recognize human authorizations to preach.

Not only were they envious that others than themselves should have the ear of the people for religious instruction, but they had listened sufficiently to the discourse themselves to ascertain that the apostles were really imparting to the people some knowledge of spiritual things. The people were actually being *taught*, and that upon subjects concerning which they, the recognized doctors of divinity and theology, knew nothing and could teach nothing. If, therefore, such teachings were permitted, the worshipers would very soon know more than their religious rulers, which would never do. They were unable to teach the people themselves, and were not humble enough of heart to receive instruction, and hence were quite ready to be overcome by the spirit of envy, hatred and malice, against those whom the Lord had appointed and was using, while passing them by. They had power to stop the preaching and to imprison the Apostles, and they did.

This same spirit was equally manifested, and even more unrighteously, by the Roman Catholics during the dark ages: they not only imprisoned but tortured and put to death those who ventured to instruct the people in spiritual things without their permission, ordination, etc. This same spirit was manifested to a considerable extent by the reformers also, we are sorry to say: Calvin, Luther, and numbers in authority in the Episcopal church from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries were similarly grieved with efforts to instruct the people outside their own channels; and the same spirit to a considerable extent followed some who fled from persecutions, in the Mayflower, to this free land. We need not accuse any of these of intentional wrong: they lived in a time when religion and politics were blended, and they verily thought they did God service in opposing as they did that which they considered to be "heresy." Had they opposed the heresy with force of logic and Scripture merely, and sought thus to vanquish what they believed to be errors, with what they believed to be truth, they would not only have been worthy of approval, but also of admiration, and they might have been led into the truth; but their zeal misled them into the use of unjust means, and they more or less fought against God. But be it noted, all these improper efforts were unavailing to suppress the truth, and merely served to purify and refine the saints, as "gold tried in the furnace."

Intelligence and liberty during the last century have to a large extent annulled the power of the spiritual rulers, and unwillingly confined their opposition against advancing truth to anathemas, excommunications, insinuations as to "unorthodox," and social ostracism. And as each reform grew in strength and asserted itself, these oppositions gradually died out;—as, for instance, the opposition to the "Quakers," to "Baptists," to "Disciples," and others. But as we read the signs of the times in the light of the divine revelation, we have every reason to believe that the present movement in favor of "Christian union" will eventuate in such a combination of all the powerful and influential religious systems as to affect politics and laws, and put into the hands of theologians the power to head off the further advance of divine truth and to stop the spirit-ordained ambassadors of Christ from teaching the people advanced truths respecting the close of this and the dawn of the new dispensation.

Arrogantly accustomed to overawing the common people with their titles, learning and authority, the High Priest and all the priestly family, and the religious rulers, and elders, and learned scribes, met as a court to hear, to overawe, to browbeat and to condemn Peter and John for their temerity in attempting to teach the people.

They were surprised when the two men whom they had judged from their general manner, dress, etc., to be "unlearned," not theologians, but of the "common people," addressed them meekly, simply, yet with holy boldness, concerning Jesus of Nazareth and his power to heal:—as much since his crucifixion and resurrection as before. Peter if speaking of himself might have been inclined to avoid mentioning the guilt of his hearers in connection with the crucifixion of our Lord; but as a chosen vessel for this very purpose he was specially under the control of the holy spirit; and, although in no bitter or acrimonious language, he told his hearers the plain truth concerning their guilt as the crucifiers of Jesus, and showed them from the prophets that they had set at naught the chief stone of the spiritual temple of God; but that nevertheless God had highly exalted him to be the Head over the church, which is his body—the spiritual temple—into which we as living stones are being built up.

There is no ambiguity in preaching done thus, under the inspiration of the holy spirit: it is direct, to the point. Peter did not say that Jesus of Nazareth was *one* of the great teachers of the world, and as worthy to be heard as Moses or Confucius or others; neither did he say, It makes no difference whether you ever hear of the historic Christ or not, as some false teachers now declare. Peter's spirit-inspired teachings were evidently not at all in harmony with what is known as the "new theology," nor with what is known as the "higher criticism," nor with what is known as the "broad theology," espoused by the Chicago Parliament of Religions, and advocated by many of the "great theologians" of our day. Peter gave the message direct and with force—"There is *none other name* given, under heaven or among men, whereby we must be saved." In these words he told his learned hearers that there was no hope of salvation in Moses and in the Law, any more than in the heathen systems of theology—that knowledge of, and faith in, and obedience to Christ was the only God appointed way of salvation.

What could they say! What could they do! under such circumstances? They had utterly failed to overawe these humble fishermen, and instead had received a discourse from them, which was wholly unexpected under such conditions. They were not in the humble attitude of heart to be affected as were the three thousand who on the day of Pentecost were pricked to the heart and converted; nor were they of the humble, worshipful, teachable spirit of the five thousand worshipers who had been converted by hearing the apostles in the temple the day before. They could do nothing but marvel. But they took knowledge of the fact, that the same meek and quiet spirit of Jesus was in these, his disciples, and the same powerful logic, directness of discourse and humility of manner.

So let it be with each of us, the followers of Jesus! If we have opportunity for testifying to his grace and gospel, let us not fear to declare the whole counsel of God, but let us not do it rudely nor unkindly, but with the gentleness and force which are of the spirit of the truth.

"YE ARE BOUGHT WITH A PRICE"*

1 COR. 6:20.

What different sentiments these inspired words awaken in different hearts! To the heart of the natural man these sentiments are very objectionable; but to the heart fully in harmony with God and the divine plan they are precious words, full of comfort and joy. The unregenerate heart, full of pride, convinces itself that it did not need to be bought; that it did not need to be redeemed; that it had no very serious ailment of sin. It is perhaps ready to admit, and would surely find it difficult to dispute, that it is imperfect; that tried in the balances of justice it would be found wanting; but to itself these lacks of perfection are very slight, and deserving of but trivial punishment of some kind, and that punishment it expects to bear and believes that it does bear to the full in earthly troubles. The natural heart believes in a great First Cause, of some kind, which it calls God: it believes also in certain laws of nature which it holds are irrevocable and unalterable. It denies that there is forgiveness. It is therefore wholly out of harmony with the gospel proposition of a "Sin-offering," a "*ransom* for all," and consequent forgiveness of sins under the terms of the New Covenant, to whomsoever will accept the conditions.

This class of unbelievers is in many respects the most hopeless; because they have a sort of worldly-wise philosophy which so fills their minds that it hinders them from seeing the beauty of the true Bible philosophy. They are usually blind to the very simplest logic that could touch this question as presented in the Scriptural declarations, "The wages of sin is death," and "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." While they cannot and do not claim perfection, it seems never to have occurred to them that all imperfection is unrighteousness, sin, and that the judgment of a perfect God would properly and naturally be the destruction of that which he does not approve, and the blessing and perpetual continuance of those things only which are acceptable in his sight, perfect things and perfect beings. Not until this view is grasped are any properly prepared for the message of the gospel—the message that God is operating in Christ for the reconciliation of the world unto himself. Only as the natural man learns that "the wages of sin is death" does he appreciate the fact that eternal life is a gift of God through Jesus Christ, our Lord; so that "he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" eternal.—1 John 5:12.

But our inspired text gives offense to the natural man, and to the man fallen from grace, in another respect; it hurts his pride. It implies that he is being treated as a mere slave, or chattel, to be bought and sold. What could be more galling than such a thought to the proud, unregenerate heart?

Nevertheless, this thought is kept up throughout the Scriptures, and the meek, the humble-minded, alone are able to appreciate it. They hear the apostle's statement that all were "*sold* under sin" (Rom. 7:14), and they realize the truthfulness of the declaration. They find abundant evidence in themselves and in the entire race that all mankind are "slaves to sin;" they find "the law of sin in their members" and in others. They find the power of sin so strong that it cannot be broken by any; that, although it may be fought against, nevertheless it holds over all mankind a mastery which the enslaved ones cannot fully overcome. They see thus, in the apostle's words representing sin as a great task master ruling the world, a very grim but very truthful picture of the facts. They inquire of the Word of God, How comes it that God, himself good, pure and perfect, has brought forth human children under such a bondage to sin through imperfection? They inquire, Do not the Scriptures declare of God, "His work is perfect?" Why then this imperfection, why this subjection to the power of sin? An answer can come from one quarter only—the Word of God; and that answer is the only satisfactory answer, the only one which meets all the requirements of the conditions as they are known to men.

That answer is, that, although God's work was perfect in the creation of man, yet the creature, being endowed with free moral agency, rebelled against the law of his Creator and thus by self-will, self-gratification, brought himself under the sentence previously prescribed—"Dying thou shalt die." This deliberate act on the part of our first parent not only brought himself under this penalty, but since his posterity proceeded from himself, all of his posterity shared in his subjection to death, and in the slavery to sin consequent to his alienation from God and his failing powers as he gradually passed under the power of death. So then the fact that father Adam *sold* himself and the posterity yet in his loins to sin, for a momentary gratification of self-will, meant not only his own enslavement, but also that all of his posterity would be born in such slavery to sin. And such are the facts of the case. All of his posterity can say with one of old, "I was born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."

Here we come to the thought which was evidently in the minds of some of the early reformers when they promulgated the doctrine of total depravity, which is held by many at least theoretically, but from which we must dissent. We hold with the Scriptures that as a result of Adamic transgression there is a *general depravity* which extends to every member of the human family, so that "there is none righteous, no, not one;" but we deny that this depravity is a *total* depravity; we deny that any individual of the human race is totally, hopelessly, in every particular, wholly without anything that is good or commendable. The only sample of total depravity of which we have any clear knowledge is Satan himself, the father of lies and of every wicked work.

But general depravity is general enough; and, being general, no man should have any difficulty in finding to some extent the portion of it which he himself has inherited, as well as discerning it in others. True, although the depravity is general, it is not alike general. Some are more depraved than others; some have the original moral likeness of God less blurred and defaced than others. In harmony with the Scripture statement that we are born in sin, every discerning person whose eyes have been opened to what depravity is can note the evidences of it even in childhood. Self-will and passionate obstinacy are often to be noted in infants but a few weeks old, and very patient should the parent be, as well as very attentive and thorough the correction of his child, when he remembers that the very traits which need correction have come down to the child from himself. Thus the Christian parent should be not only the most thorough in the matter of training up a child in the way it should go, but also the most patient, considerate and kind in giving this correction.

We have then before our minds the fact and general prevalence of sin and whence it comes; and we see the force of the Apostle's words when he personifies sin as a tyrant master, and represents mankind as his slaves, to whom he pays his wages—death. "The wages of sin is death." We have seen that God is not blamable for this enslavement, but, as the Scriptures declare, it was by one man's disobedience that all were brought under the power of sin and subjected to the wages which it pays. While the extreme wages only are mentioned—death—yet before the payment of the full wages, we all received incidentally many of the aches and pains and difficulties, mental, physical and moral, imposed by this great task master, sin. And as a groaning creation travailing in pain together under this hard task-master and suffering from his cruel lashes, all long for deliverance, and some of us have cried out to God for help—for salvation from sin and death, into righteousness and life.

God wishes us to learn very thoroughly the lesson of the "exceeding sinfulness of sin," of its gall and bitterness, and of the hopelessness of any deliverance, except that which he will provide. Personal experience has proved to us that we cannot deliver ourselves from this slavery, that, in order to overcome the wicked one and his wiles and arts, which take firm hold of us because of the weaknesses of our flesh and through the fall, we need a power that we do not by nature possess. Finding ourselves powerless to help ourselves, we would naturally look to each other for aid; and indeed might get some aid from each other; but we all know how little aid can be given or received from natural sources. And when we learn the lesson which the Scriptures teach that *all* are slaves, that all were sold under sin, that "there is none righteous, no, not one," then we see the utter helplessness of our condition as a race. All who realize the situation and feel the bondage and seek deliverance may thus see that the only hope is in God. If they reflect that it was God himself who pronounced the sentence of death, and that he could not annul his own sentence nor transgress his own laws, let them reflect also that as he has superior power to ours, he has also superior wisdom, and that he may know how to do that which to us would seem an impossibility.

And this was the case: When there was no eye to pity and no arm to deliver, then God pitied and his arm (power—in Christ) brought salvation. (Psa. 69:20) But how? How will God deliver? How can God himself continue to be just

[See June 15, 1919, issue critical examination covenant articles.]

and yet release his condemned creatures from the sentence of his own law? Our text answers: God provided that these slaves of sin, sold into slavery by disobedience of their father Adam, are to be delivered by a great Saviour, who first of all would purchase them and afterwards set free all who will accept freedom upon his terms and conditions.

The price in the original sale was disobedience, and its sentence death; the price of the purchase was obedience unto death. Not only so, but, this is expressed in the meaning of the word "ransom," a corresponding price: the redemption price by which the race is purchased must correspond in all particulars to the original sentence. The purchase price, the ransom price, must in every sense of the word correspond to that which was forfeited by the transgression. Adam was perfect as a man before he sinned, hence, whoever will be his redeemer must be a perfect man. A perfect angel would not do, nor would a perfect arch-angel be a suitable price; they would be as inadequate as a sacrifice to meet the conditions, as an imperfect man would be, or a lower animal. God has placed the matter in such a form by his own law and sentence, that only a *perfect man* could be a ransom, a corresponding price, for the perfect man who sinned, and in whom the whole race of mankind had been sold under sin and under its penalty, death.

It was in order to prepare the great sacrifice for sin, and in harmony with the divine wisdom and plan, that the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, full of perfection, submitted himself to the Father's will, that he should humble himself to (without dying) be transferred or translated from his high and glorious nature and condition to a lower nature and condition, lower than that of the arch-angel, lower than that of ordinary angels, down to the condition of man;—not to the condition of sinful man, but to the proper condition in which God had created man (in which Adam was before he sinned). Obedient to this arrangement, our Lord Jesus "was made flesh," became of the same nature as the race which had gone into the slavery of sin, but he did not share in its sin nor in its imperfections. The apostle's declaration is that, in harmony with this divine purpose, our Lord, the only begotten of the Father, left the glory of his original nature and "was made flesh" and dwelt among us, and that for the purpose "that he, by the grace of God, should taste death for every man." When, therefore, our Lord appeared in this humble condition, divested of the glories of his original spirit nature, humbled to human conditions, it was not that he had died to his previous spiritual condition, for, although he came to die, he had not yet died. It was the *man* Christ Jesus who gave himself our ransom in death, and not the spirit being who previously became the man: the humbling from spirit conditions to human conditions, laying aside of the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, and becoming poor for our sakes, was only incidental to his great sacrifice begun at Jordan and finished at Calvary. But the man Christ Jesus was the same one who previously had been rich in spiritual nature and glory, and who could and did say, "Before Abraham was I *am*," thus particularly emphasizing the fact that he had not ceased to exist at any time in the transfer of his being from the higher to the lower condition.

Had our Lord been born as the son of Joseph, or received his life from any other human source, he would have been a partaker of the sentence upon our race, and of the weaknesses of the fallen flesh, and of the slavery to sin through that weakness. And the Scriptures are very careful to point out to us that his life did not come through such a channel and that it had none of this imperfection, declaring that "in him was no sin." He was holy, harmless, separate from sinners; although partaker of human nature, he was not a partaker of a fallen human nature, but of its perfection. If it is inquired whether he did not receive contamination, sinful nature, etc., through his mother, we reply, No; and we are ready to support the testimony of the Word of God by showing its reasonableness upon philosophical principles. But for this phase of the subject we must refer our readers to an article under the caption, "The Undefiled One," in our issue of July '90.

He who came to be our Ransomer, our Purchaser, to pay for us the debt on account of which we were all made slaves to sin and death, was in fullest sympathy with the divine purpose, and made haste so that at the very earliest moment possible he began the work which the Father had given him to do. Since Adam at the time of his transgression was a perfect man, and since under the law manhood was reckoned as beginning at the thirtieth year, therefore, it was needful that our Lord should delay the work of sacrifice on our behalf until he had become in the full legal sense the *man* Jesus; then he began the work by consecrating himself even unto death, baptism in water being the symbol of this; and during the three and a half years which followed he was but carrying out that covenant of death, dying daily; and at the close of three and a half years he could say upon the cross "It is finished."

What was finished? the release of the slaves of sin? No; the slaves of sin for whose redemption he gave his life were still in bondage their slavery was not finished. What was finished? The sacrifice was finished, nothing more; it was not yet even accepted. The presentation of that sacrifice on our behalf and its acceptance by the Father did not take place until nearly fifty days after he who redeemed us had been raised from the dead by the Father's power thus giving assurance to all that his work was well and satisfactorily done and that it would be accepted in due time. And he ascended up on high and, as the High Priest appeared before the Father and applied his merit on our behalf as believers. The sacrifice offered, the price paid is sufficient; it covers every member of the human family. For since all men came under the slavery of sin and under the sentence to death through the transgression of Adam, now that the *corresponding price has been paid for Adam*, it implies full satisfaction for all the posterity of Adam the sharers of his sentence. The race had been bought; and more than this, the world had been bought, including the earth itself, because the earth was given to man as his inheritance, and when he himself became a slave, all of his possessions passed with him into the slavery of sin, and so the curse has rested upon the world. And now that Adam and his race have been bought, how could it mean less than the redemption also of the earth from the dominion of the curse?

But we see not yet the earth's release from the curse, we see not yet mankind delivered from the slavery to sin, we see that still the race is going down daily into death; "Dying thou shalt die" is still written against the race of Adam. Why is this so? The Scriptures, and the Scriptures only, answer this question. They declare that God is at present selecting the "royal priesthood" and "joint-heirs with Christ," who shall by and by share with him in the Kingdom which shall break off the shackles of sin and open the prison doors of death and set free all the captives who long for freedom upon the divine conditions. This, we remember, was our Lord's declaration on this subject: He declared at his first advent that the ultimate result of his work would be "to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." (Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18) As we gladly accept the divine arrangement and realize it to be best, so we must also accept the divine times and seasons, and realize that they are wisely ordained; and indeed all whose eyes are anointed with present truth may already see much of this wisdom.

While all mankind, therefore, have been bought, so far as our Lord Jesus' sacrifice is concerned, it being once for all, nevertheless, the only ones who are yet received of the Lord, who are yet brought into relationship to him through Christ, are those who recognize his sacrifice, and who, whether they understand the subject philosophically or not, believe what the Scriptures so distinctly declare, that we were bought with a price—the precious blood of Christ. It is this class that the Apostle addresses; these who realize that they were slaves of sin and who now realize that they have been bought with the precious blood of Christ, and who having accepted of him and his power to save, are no longer yielding themselves as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin, but are seeking to yield themselves as servants of righteousness unto God. It would be useless for the Apostle to address any others than these in this manner, but pertinent and forceful is his argument to those who realize the true situation, and who are clinging to Christ as their Redeemer who shall ultimately be their Deliverer. To these he says,—"Ye are not your own." Your time, your talent, your influence, your money, all that you consider precious or in any degree valuable, all properly belongs to God. It was not only his by right, in that it originally was his creation, because all that we have that is valuable in any sense of the word, has come from the heavenly Father; but now it is his in a second sense, in the sense that he has redeemed or bought it back from the destruction to which by sin our first parent delivered it.

The Apostle uses this argument as though it should be a conclusive one with all who are right-minded; and so we believe it is. And those who are rightly exercised by this knowledge of divine grace in Christ not only accept the forgiveness of sins with thankfulness and joy, and with meekness and humility acknowledge that they were slaves of sin and that they were redeemed therefrom, but they also gladly acknowledge the new Ruler, the Purchaser, and that to him they owe all they have and all they ever hope to be.

Personal responsibility to the Redeemer who purchased, and to the heavenly Father who provided the gracious arrangement, lies at the foundation of all true consecration to God in Christ. As soon as the believing, grateful, justified one hears of the blessing that has come to him, he properly inquires, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" He finds that the new Master does not wish for any except voluntary servants, and that, having provided them release from the sentence of death, he nevertheless would permit them, if they chose, to go back and become again voluntarily the servants of sin, and to receive the wages of sin, the second death, as the reward for their voluntary submission again to that taskmaster. He learns that to be the servants of the new Master is a great privilege, a privilege that is enjoyed by all who have the proper spirit. Such hear the words of the Apostle, "I beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, and your reasonable service." They see the apostle's own example, how, laying aside not only the works of the flesh and the devil, but also laying aside earthly ambitions, aims, prospects and hopes, he gave himself, his time, talent, influence and all he had to the service of the new Master, the Redeemer, and thus to God. They read in his living epistle, in his trials and triumphs through faith in Christ, lessons which some of them at least heartily accept; and as a consequence there have been throughout this Gospel age some who have been glad to own themselves as the bond-servants (slaves) of the Lord Jesus Christ and of God.

At the opening of the new year, what lesson could be more important to us than this one, that we are not our own, but belong to another; that we are not, therefore, to seek to please ourselves, but to please him, nor to seek to serve self but to serve him, nor to seek or obey self will, but on the contrary his will. This means holiness in the most absolute and comprehensive sense of the word (not only separation from sin to righteousness, but separation from *self* to the will of God in Christ).

THE SALT OF THE EARTH AND THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

"Ye are the salt of the earth. . . . Ye are the light of the world."—Matt. 5:13, 14.

Salt and light are two essentials to humanity, and in nature both are abundantly supplied. Salt enters largely into the composition of both animal and vegetable organisms, and its use as a condiment is much appreciated and to a greater or less extent required by both man and beast. At a very early stage of human progress salt became an important element of commerce, and it is believed that the very oldest trade routes were created for traffic in this needful and much valued commodity. Among inland peoples a salt spring was regarded as a special gift of the gods, and so a religious significance began by and by to attach to it; and it was, therefore, as a precious substance, mingled with their offerings to the gods. Homer voiced this sentiment, calling salt divine; and Plato referred to it as "a substance dear to the gods."

In harmony with its uses and its general appreciation the term salt early came to have a generally recognized symbolic significance (which our Lord utilized and perpetuated) to teach important lessons, both under the old dispensation of the law and under the new dispensation of grace. As a savory article of diet, it symbolized hospitality; and as an antiseptic it signified durability, fidelity, purity. Hence the Bible expression "a covenant of salt" (Num. 18:19), as covenants were ordinarily made over a sacrificial meal in which salt was an important element. "With all thine offerings thou shalt offer salt." (Lev. 2:13) The preservative qualities of salt make it, when so used, a fitting symbol of an enduring compact. The purifying property of salt was referred to in its symbolic use by Elisha in his miracle of the healing of the waters.—2 Kings 2:20-22.

The symbolism of salt, therefore, in the above words of our Lord, is clearly this—that the influence of the true Christian upon the world is a healing, purifying influence, tending always to the preservation of that which is good from the adverse elements of putrefaction and decay. "Ye are the salt of the earth." How significant the comparison!

These words also indicate a responsibility on the part of Christians toward the world in general. Though they are not of the world, even as Christ was not of the world (John 17:16), but separated from it, a peculiar people, chosen of God, they are not to forget that this very separation and exaltation to fellowship, communion and co-operation with God, is, not to cultivate in them a pride of aristocracy, but for the purpose of blessing the world; for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to redeem them (John 3:16), and Christ likewise so loved the world as freely to become the instrument of Jehovah for its salvation.—John 6:51; 10:18; Heb. 2:9; Rom. 5:18, 19.

We note further that these statements are in the present tense,—Ye *are* the salt and the light,—even now, before the time for the general blessing of all the families of the earth through the church glorified. We call to mind also the exhortation of the Apostle Paul: "Walk in wisdom toward them that are without, redeeming the time. Let your speech be always with grace seasoned with salt," the appetizing salt of purity, righteousness, truth.—Col. 4:5, 6.

The proper attitude of the Christian toward the world is thus shown to be, not that of a proud, stoical indifference, but that of a noble, generous, loving benevolence which, while it keeps entirely separate from its spirit, from its unholy aims, ambitions and doings, is ever ready to bless and, by precept and example, to point to the way of life and holiness. It is not that attitude which proudly says, "I am holier than thou," but which, on the contrary, says, "I am no better than thou, except for the influences of divine grace, which are free to all who will accept them. By grace, I am what I am; yet still my shortcomings necessitate the merit of my all-sufficient Advocate." It is not necessary that these sentiments should be expressed in words; for actions speak louder than words, and their testimony is much more potent. The testimony of a holy walk and conversation cannot fail to be to the glory of God, to the wisdom and excellence of righteousness, to the reproof of unrighteousness, and to the fact of a coming judgment in which righteousness shall surely triumph.—John 16:8; Acts 24:25.

"Salt is good," said Jesus, referring to its symbolism of purity, righteousness, and to its cleansing, healing and preserving influence; "have salt [purity, righteousness] in yourselves." (Mark 9:50) If we have not the salt in ourselves, how can we be the salt of the earth? If we are not truly and sincerely righteous, how can we exert upon others the cleansing, healing influence? Mere outward profession of righteousness will not avail as a substitute for the salt of actual and sincere holiness. Mere profession has no healing properties, and can never fulfill our obligations toward the world. Therefore, let us have the salt of actual holiness in ourselves; so shall we be known and read of men to the praise of God.

Under this same speaking symbol our Lord also adds a word of warning, saying,—"If the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth *good for nothing*, but to be cast out, and to be trodden under foot of men." So if the Christian who once had the salt of righteousness in himself should turn again like the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire; if he should wilfully and persistently fall away from his righteousness, he is "thenceforth *good for nothing*." (Heb. 6:4-8; 10:26-31, 38, 39) How important then that we not only have salt in ourselves, but that we continue to retain its healthful properties!

This same class Jesus also declared to be "the light of the world." Although they do not yet shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of God for the enlightening of the whole world, they are nevertheless luminous even now, and their light may shine within a smaller radius for the blessing of all who will receive it. And the Lord's solicitude for the benighted world, as well as for his saints, is shown in his exhortation to the latter to let their light shine. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." He also counsels the setting of our light in a position where it may dispel as much as possible of the darkness of this world. We are therefore not to put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick. Zeal for the Lord needs no further exhortation to this duty and privilege; for, like him, all who have his spirit or disposition in the matter will find in this duty and privilege their meat and drink. It will be their joy to let the light that has illuminated their darkness—the light of God's truth and of his holy spirit—shine out through them upon the darkness of others.

Thus, through the salt and the light of God's people, a measure of blessing comes to the world, even before its day of blessing. And at this end of the age we may with some degree of definiteness sum up their effects. A little observation shows that all the blessings of temporal prosperity included under the term "civilization" are due to the influences, direct and indirect, of those comparatively few people who,

during this Gospel age, have been the salt of the earth and the light of the world. Civilization is simply the indirect result of the measures of salt and light that have been in the world up to this present time. The faithful people of God have held up the light of divine truth as prominently as they could; and from it they have reasoned of righteousness and of a coming judgment; they have endeavored to salt the minds of men with as much as possible of the knowledge of the principles of righteousness exemplified in their own characters, and have urged their adoption; and to the extent to which these have operated the world has been profited.

The Lord, who foresaw the end from the beginning, knew that, with all their salt and all their light, his people would not be able to accomplish for the world in general more than this, until the appointed time for their exaltation with himself to power and great glory. But even this work of civilization is of great value as preparatory to the greater future work of restitution, and also in facilitating the special work of this Gospel age, of taking out a people prepared for the Lord, kings and priests unto God, the bride of Christ.

Then, beloved heirs of the promises of God, to whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the Kingdom, "have salt in yourselves," and forget not that, being thus salted, ye are the salt of the earth, so that your very presence is a rebuke to iniquity, and its continuance a living testimony to the beauty of holiness and the power of divine grace. Let us endeavor also to focus the light of divine truth and its holy spirit that from the glowing focus of a chastened and purified character the light may radiate again to the blessing of all who will heed it, to the warning of all who will not, and to the praise of the great center and source of all light—God himself.

MRS. M. F. RUSSELL.

QUESTIONS OF GENERAL INTEREST

CONCERNING THE EPISTLE OF JAMES

Question. I notice in the columns of the WATCH TOWER frequent reference to the Epistle of James, applying its statements to Christian believers, the same as the other New Testament writings. In the October '96 issue you called attention to the remarkable fulfilment before our eyes of a prophecy by James (5:1-8); and his exhortation, "Be patient, brethren," you applied to Christian believers. Also frequently you have quoted James 1:18, applying it to Christians in the TOWER discussing Faith and Prayer Cures. etc., you cited James 5:14-16, claiming that it referred to Christians seriously sick as a chastisement for sins of omission or commission, and that the prayer should be for the forgiveness of *confessed sins* and the restoration of the transgressor to divine favor, as in verse 16;—and that the word "if" of verse 15 would be better translated *though*, etc. And finally, in the January 1 issue (page 7), discussing the true Israel, you apply James 1:1, as meaning the *true* Jews residing in various parts of the civilized world, to whom the gospel was preached "first" (Acts 3:26) and who believed—many of them at and shortly after Pentecost.

Now my question is, How can we harmonize these teachings with an article which appeared in the WATCH TOWER, May 15, 1892, representing the Epistle of James as addressed not to Christians but to Jews?

Answer. You are correct in supposing that the two positions are antagonistic and not harmonizable. The article to which you refer last, as being in conflict with our general presentations, was not an editorial article. Nevertheless, the Editor does not claim that his negligence in the matter is a sufficient excuse. It is a part of his duty to be critical, and to exclude whatever his judgment does not approve; and he now promises that by the Lord's grace he will hereafter be still more careful of his stewardship,—to the end that ZION'S WATCH TOWER may ever speak as an oracle of God.

Now that this matter is corrected a weight is lifted from our conscience. Had the article in question been an editorial we would have corrected it long ago.

WAS MOTHER EVE RANSOMED?

Question. If it be true, as you seem to prove that the Scriptures teach, that the man Christ Jesus gave himself as the *ransom* or corresponding price for Adam, and an ungenerated race in his loins for the ungenerated race of Adam in his loins at the time of his disobedience and which since born has shared, naturally, every feature of his sentence,—how would it be with Mother Eve? She was not *in* Adam at the time of transgression, but was a separate individual accountable for her own deeds and the first to participate in the sin of disobedience and hence a sharer before Adam in the sentence of death. How was her *ransom* paid? Or was it ever paid, and will she ever be released from the sentence?

Answer. Originally, Eve was a part of Adam's body; and after she was separated from him physically she was not separated from him actually; but, as he expressed it, she was still bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh;—they were not *twain* but *one* flesh. Adam was not given to Eve to be her help-mate, but she was given to him to be a help meet (suitable) for him. Not that this signified a right on Adam's part to treat Eve as a slave, or to be cruel, or abusive, or even unkind to her, as some of the fallen race today seem to suppose. Quite the contrary, Adam was a *true* man and loved, planned for and cared for Eve "as his *own body*." In the divine division care had been taken to adapt each to the other's necessities. Adam, the stronger physically and mentally, enjoyed having just such a helper as needed his care and love. Eve, as the "weaker vessel," possessed delicacy of mind and manner as well as of physique which drew toward her the tenderest and noblest sentiments of her royal husband, whose pleasure it was to grant her a share in all the blessings and honors of his realm, as a queen.

But they were not twain, but one; and of that one Adam was the head. In dealing with them God did not recognize them separately but as one. Adam represented not only his own individual person but also his wife's person; for she was "his own body," "bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh;"—she was part of himself.

Hence it is written, "All in Adam die." Eve's identity was so linked with Adam's that, even if she had not sinned in partaking of the forbidden fruit, she would as part of him, as his partner, have shared his penalty—death. And, similarly, although Eve was "first in the transgression," her act did not imperil the race; because the race was not in her, but in Adam. (1 Cor. 15:22) It was "By one *man's* disobedience" that "sin entered into the world and death by [as the result of] sin."—Rom. 5:12-19.

Moreover, it is evident that, the accountability being in Adam as the head of the family, Eve's deception and transgression need not necessarily have brought death even upon herself: she probably would have been disciplined, however. The principle of this judgment is shown by the Lord under the Law Covenant, which, formulated by the same Creator, upheld the same arrangement and recognized the husband and father as in every way the head and representative of the family. For instance, if any man vowed a vow to the Lord he could not escape it; but if a wife or a daughter vowed a *vow* unto the Lord it was void except as ratified by the husband or father. (Num. 30:2, 5, 8, 13, 16) In other words, God has not only established the family relationship by the laws of nature in adapting the man to be the head of the family and the woman to be his helper, but he clearly expressed this in the Law given to Israel which is "honorable," "just" and "good."—Rom. 7:12.

Looking along these strongly marked lines of divine providence we can see clearly that Eve had recognition of the Lord only as a part of Adam: hence we can see that this not only involved her in *his* transgression and its penalty, death, but also that the redemption of Adam implied also the redemption of Eve as a part of Adam, "his body." This close relationship between the husband and wife in the divine order is clearly stated by the Apostle Paul.—Eph. 5:22-33.

Now many marriages are not after the divine pattern. The fall of the race, mentally, morally and physically, has affected its various members, some more and some less. All men and all women have lost more or less of the noble character possessed by the first perfectly adapted pair. It is not surprising, therefore, that there are now many mis-fit unions and consequent unhappiness; especially when the divine order of adaptability is not recognized. Following the divine model a man should avoid marrying a woman who is his superior as much as one who is his inferior: because in the inferior he could not have real fellowship, she being unequal as a mate in life; while with the superior there would be a continual conflict because of his incapacity to fill properly the office of husband or head to a superior. Likewise a woman should guard specially against marrying a man her inferior, whom she could not look up to as a fit husband and head of the family according to the divine command, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body."—Eph. 5:22, 23.

As man has sunken into barbarism, woman sank with him; as man has risen in civilization, woman has risen with him; so also have man's subjects, the lower animals, and the vegetable kingdom, been cursed or blessed by his degradation or elevation. It is the operation of the divine law. The schools and seminaries for girls are the provisions of the men as truly as are the schools for boys. The gradual changing of the laws, adapting them to the advancing civilization, takes cognizance of woman's rising conditions as well as of man's, yet these laws are framed by men.

Human laws, based upon divine laws, take cognizance of the husband and father as the representative not only of his wife, who is a part of himself, but also of his minor children, in matters of general welfare, just as it was with Israel, and just as it was before sin entered Eden. The endeavor in modern times to destroy the unity of the family and to make husband and wife twain instead of one is in harmony with other delusions after which mankind are clutching in the hope of thereby remedying present evils. The mothers who have no influence upon their husbands and sons, and the sisters who have no influence upon their brothers and fathers, thereby prove themselves unworthy of a franchise. Those who have such an influence have no need of a franchise, are better in harmony with the Lord's order.

"THE SPADE AND THE BIBLE"

"It has been tacitly assumed by the critical school that the art of writing was practically unknown in Palestine before the age of David. Therefore little historical credence can be placed in the early records of the Hebrew people. The events not being recorded at the time of their occurrence, the Bible history of them became traditional and mythical before they were finally written.

"Even Renan allies himself to this theory in his 'History of Israel.' He distinctly says that writing was unknown in the day of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and laughs at the mistakes of Moses.

"In 1888, some Fellahin in upper Egypt, while digging for nitrous soil to enrich their gardens, accidentally dug in upon certain clay tablets. It was a discovery, and the scholars were soon on the trail. Several hundred tablets were found. Prof. Sayce, of Oxford, has been at work deciphering these tablets found at Tel El Amarna, and what do they turn out to be, now that they are deciphered? They turn out to be documents older than the Exodus, and copies of letters between Egypt and the nations of the East. Among these are communications from Palestine. From these tablets Prof. Sayce tells us that he learns that knowledge was far advanced in that early period, and that philosophy and science were common. That ancient period had advanced schools of learning, and many cities had as a possession large public libraries. For example, the old name of Hebron, a town of Judah, was Kirjath-Sepher; this was the name of the town before the Hebrews took it. That name literally means Book-Town, and it was called Book-Town because it was the seat of a public library. That was away back, centuries before the organization of the kingdom of Israel.

"But this is not all. What is more remarkable is this: The site of the city Ur of the Chaldees, the native place of Abraham, has been unearthed, and even there a library has been discovered showing that Abraham's people were a literary people. There are today in the British Museum some of the sacred songs which they sung in that far-off age, and also a carved signet which they used for the stamping of deeds and contracts. This marvelously confirms the story in the Book of Genesis and testifies to the correctness of Moses who tells us that Abraham bought the cave of Machpelah from the children of Heth in a business way.

"You see the point of all this. It is this: The credibility of Scripture has been assailed, since the beginning of the present century, on the ground that the narratives contained in it are not contemporaneous with the events they profess to record, because they represent an incredible amount of civilization as existing in the ancient Eastern world, and because they are inconsistent with the accounts of classical writers, and because writing was little known or practiced at so early a date. Discoveries show that there is absolutely no ground for such adverse reasoning, and that its premise is wholly false. There was a high civilization back there; the art of writing was well known, and the state of things was precisely what the Bible represents and requires. The spade has actually uncovered the old civilization, and we see it. Its products are before our eyes, and seeing is believing.

"Sargon's name occurs but once in the Old Testament. (Isa. 20:1) As no trace of Sargon could be found in classical writers, he was objected to as fictitious. The finger of the skeptic pointed to the name 'Sargon' in ridicule, and the Bible was charged with putting off fiction as history. How strange! The quaint old tablets of Nineveh have been exhumed, and with them the history of Sargon. It is found that so far from being a fiction he was one of the greatest monarchs that ever ruled in Assyria, and that his reign lasted seventeen years. The very event recorded by the prophet Isaiah, in connection with which his name is mentioned, is recorded in Sargon's annals, and unexpected light is thrown upon the Scripture.

"In the Bible there are several allusions to a people called the Hittites. Objectors to the historical truth of the narratives of the Old Testament, like Professor F. Newman, declared that these allusions destroyed the credibility of the Bible. There was no reference to this people anywhere in classical writers. The Bible stood alone in affirming that they once existed. It had no witnesses to confirm or corroborate its statements. Thus it was until a few years ago. But now Hittites' monuments, disinterred, are in all the leading museums of the world. This lost kingdom has been reclaimed. Its very wealth has been dug up, and it is found that it existed before the days of Abraham and long after his days, and was equal in greatness and civilization and in military progress to Assyria and Egypt. Whole volumes full of real thrill have been written during the past ten years, upon this wonderful find of the Hittites.

"Take one other case. In 2 Chron. 33:11, it is said that when Esarhaddon, King of Assyria, took Manasseh captive, he carried him to Babylon. For a long time the objectors to the Bible pointed their fingers at this record and said, here is one of the mistakes of the Bible. 'It could not be, for Nineveh was the capital of Assyria, and not Babylon.' In his excavations of Nineveh, George Smith unearthed a whole library, in the palace of King Assur-banapal. It is called the stone library, for its books were clay tablets baked into stone. On these clay tablets he found written the very story of the Chronicles, and written there as it is written in the Bible. And more than that he found it explained how it came that Esarhaddon carried Manasseh to Babylon and not to Nineveh. To keep down discontent in Babylon, which was a province of Nineveh, the king built a palace there and made it his second capital, and carried prisoners of war to it and thus honored it.

"Even in the nineteenth century God keeps on confirming his own Book by unexpected surprises. And what is noticeable is this: These surprises come as needed rebuttals of specific objections against the Bible. Now remember this, that every wonderful answer to the scoff and objection of the skeptic which exploration gives us is not only a foe of skepticism, it is at the same time a friend of faith. A solid and irresistible answer to an objection against the Bible is a solid and powerful argument in support of the Bible.

"As we behold the nineteen centuries after Christ confronted, by means of the pick and spade of the explorer, with the nineteen centuries before Christ, and learn for the first time how to answer objections, which for ages seemed to be unanswerable, and to explain difficulties which until now seemed too inexplicable, may we not learn a lesson of faith and of patience? Learn patience, and wait for God's own time as to the removal of difficulties that are still unsolved. Learn faith, and sit down as calmly in the presence of acknowledged objections as you do in the presence of objections which have been reconciled and which you now call harmonious facts. By means of the story of the past learn to trust the Bible for the future. —DR. DAVID GREGG.

LYING TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

FEB. 7.—Acts 4:32-5:11.

"Man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart."—1 Sam. 16:17.

The number of believers in Jerusalem was now considerable. Their new faith broke down the walls of prejudice and tended to bring rich and poor to the plane of common brotherhood in Christ. This is always the tendency with those who receive the gospel of the Lord Jesus into good and honest hearts: they are "pitiful," "kind one to another" and "love as brethren." Experience teaches us, however, that so long as there are hypocrites, who follow merely for the loaves and fishes, and so long as we are without the inspired apostles, possessed of superhuman wisdom in discerning spirits and re-

buking them, and so long as even the true-hearted have such various developments of character and judgment, it is unreasonable to expect that believers could dwell together harmoniously and to mutual benefit. The incapable ones always feel themselves the most capable, and are the least willing to be guided by the judgment of others. The most capable are the most humble, the least disposed to grasp authority and to "exercise lordship" such as would be necessary for the proper control of the incompetent. Hence Christian people of experience and judgment have reached the conclusion that general communism of goods such as was practiced for a time in the early church as narrated in this lesson could not be profitably practiced by Christian people in any age or country, for the same reasons that it was unsuccessful in the early church. When that which is perfect shall have come, it will be possible for those possessed not only of perfect hearts (wills) but also possessed of perfect brains and bodies, to use communistic principles properly and to their general advantage. But all people of judgment and experience know that this time has not yet come. The failure of this early church community and the failure of scores of communities since then is ample proof of this.*

(33) Evidently the chief subject of discourse with the apostles was the resurrection of our Lord Jesus from the dead and the proof which this afforded of several things: (1) That he was approved of God, that he was what he claimed to be, the Messiah, and not an impostor; (2) that his death was the great sin-offering, the ransom price for the whole world; (3) that in his name was forgiveness of sins and all power for reconciliation with the Father; (4) that a new dispensation of grace, mercy, forgiveness of sins had displaced the Law dispensation of justice, and that, now, not only could there be acceptance with God through Christ, but a high calling to joint-heirship with the Messiah in his kingdom soon to be established, in which all the families of the earth shall be blessed. The apostles hung the entire weight of their testimony upon this one matter—the resurrection of our Lord. And the Apostle Paul's preaching, later, is no less emphatic upon this than the Apostle Peter's at the time of this lesson, for he declares: "If Christ be not risen your faith is vain, our preaching is vain, ye are yet in your sins, and we (apostles) are false witnesses, because we have testified that God raised up Christ from the dead, whom he raised not up, if so be that the resurrection of the dead is an impossibility." —1 Cor. 15:15-18.

(34) The true spirit of Christ is indicated by the fact that the needy were not suffered to lack while the others had plenty. The Apostle James calls attention to this matter, saying, "He who seeth his brother have need and shutteth up his bowels of compassion against him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" And again, we are told by the divine Word, that it is not sufficient that we should express sympathy and good wishes, saying, "Depart and be fed and clothed," but give not those things which are necessary to these ends. Undoubtedly, it is the design of the divine plan that the inequalities of the present time—poverty in the midst of wealth —shall be to some extent an opportunity to those who have this world's goods, and a test to them of their faithfulness as stewards. And the Scriptures pertinently inquire, "If ye love not your brother whom ye have seen, how can ye love God whom ye have not seen?" Hence, the Lord's work and the Lord's poor are permitted by him to be in *need* sometimes, in order to furnish opportunities to test those who have means entrusted to them. He who is unfaithful as a steward of earthly wealth need scarcely expect to be entrusted with spiritual riches.

COMMUNITY NOT PRACTICAL NOW

It appears from the account that the apostles did not institute the community of goods in the early church, rather it was the spontaneous sentiment of the believers; and the apostles under the divine guidance did not hinder it, evidently to the intent that an object lesson might be furnished and the importance of consecration illustrated in the story of Ananias and Sapphira. The writer first mentioned instances of those who honestly consecrated all of their property to the general good. Notable amongst these was Barnabas who afterwards was the associate of the Apostle Paul in doing a great work. The principal figures in the lesson, however, are Ananias and Sapphira. None had been *commanded* of the Lord to give all their property to the general treasury; nor had there been any request to do so, although it is only a reasonable service for all who realize that they were "bought with a price." But God wants only a free-will consecration. Ananias and his wife saw others do this and were probably anxious for the honor and praise bestowed upon such liberal givers, and concluded that they would make a reputation for themselves among the believers; and at the same time hold back a sufficiency for future requirements. There was nothing necessarily wrong in such a provision, reserving for their own personal use a portion of the proceeds of the sale of their property. The wrong came in the attempted deception of the church, in the attempt to have the apostles and the fellow-believers think that they were exercising all the faith and practicing all the self-denial, which some others had practiced. The Apostle Peter indicates that this was not merely lying to the church and attempting to deceive the church, but more, it was an attempted deception of the holy Spirit.

The penalty was death to both the participants, for husband and wife alike united in deception. The Lord would evidently thus teach the church (1) that while men might be deceived, it was impossible to deceive God; and (2) that such a fraud is a very heinous sin in God's sight.

DID ANANIAS DIE THE SECOND DEATH?

The question naturally arises, Was this death of Ananias and Sapphira merely a prompt infliction of the Adamic death, under whose sentence they already were? Or, was it the infliction of the second death, and does it teach us that the attempted deception of the holy Spirit is punishable by the second death; and that there is no hope in any sense of the word for Ananias and Sapphira. No one, we believe, can satisfactorily answer this question, because the facts relating to the matter are too indefinite. For instance, we do not know whether they had "passed from death unto life" (reckonedly from the Adamic death to life in Christ). We do not know that they had more information on this subject than some who followed the Lord and to whom he said, "Ye follow me, because of the loaves and the fishes." Ananias and Sapphira may never have been true converts at heart, but merely, yet in their sins, have been struck with the possibilities of the growing community, and acquainted with some in it; they perhaps thought it a good opportunity to fix themselves for future days, and in order to have a standing and place in the community were willing to give part of the proceeds of their property. If this were their state of heart, if they had never really received the grace of God, then we believe that their death was merely a sooner accomplishment of the general sentence of the Adamic death and not second death; and we should expect that the due time will come in the Millennial kingdom, when the blinded eyes of their understanding would be opened, and they should see matters in a full, clear and proper light with the opportunity of either accepting or rejecting God's provision. But if they had come to a clear knowledge of the truth, had tasted of the heavenly gift and had been made partakers of the holy Spirit, and then sinned wilfully in this matter, we should understand that their death was the second death, the penalty for their own wilful transgression. The particulars are not stated, nor was it necessary to the narrative. The lesson to the early church and the lesson to us is the same in either case; namely, that it is impossible to deceive God who discerns the thoughts and intents of the heart.

This entire lesson brings forcibly to our thought the fact that every "new creature in Christ" has consecrated something to the Lord. Our offering should be not merely a portion of our substance, but all of it, including ourselves—time, influence, possessions—and these we may lay not at the apostle's feet, but at the feet of our Lord, in consecration. We cannot refrain from the thought—How many who have consecrated their *all* to the Lord are attempting not only to deceive the Lord, but to deceive also themselves, and to give a portion only of that which they have consecrated?

This is the great point of this lesson to all who are of this consecrated class; and the Apostle Peter's words to Ananias should be carefully weighed and applied by each one who has professed full consecration to the Lord—"While it [thy possessions] remained was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power?" We may apply this to ourselves, and say, The Lord did not compel my consecration; it was a voluntary thing, even though admitted to be a reasonable service; and as we have hitherto seen in the Lord's estimation, it is a very serious matter to make vows and afterward to reconsider, or attempt to take back, that which we have consecrated to him.

No wonder great fear came upon all the church—the feeling of responsibility; a feeling that in contracting with the Lord they were engaged in serious business. And so the Apostle says to the consecrated, "Let us fear, lest a promise having been left us, any of you should seem to come short of it."

* See article, "They Had All Things in Common," in our issue of Sept. 1, '95.

"OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN"

FEB. 14.—Acts 5:17-32.

The phenomenal success of the gospel under the apostles' preaching, in the power of the holy Spirit, soon awakened bitter opposition on the part of the rulers of the Jews. In a previous lesson we saw that they did not hesitate to put the apostles in prison; and how they sought to convict them of crime for healing the lame man, in the name of Jesus. Their opposition, instead of dying out, increased as they perceived the wonderful strides of progress made by the new doctrine. They felt compelled to make another attempt to head off what they considered the heresy of the Nazarene.

(17, 18) The two principal sects amongst the Jews at this time were the Pharisees and Sadducees. The Pharisees made loud professions of "holiness," and did much in the way of outward display, which our Lord, who could read the heart, declared was hypocrisy; while the Sadducees, better educated as a class and less orthodox, were more after the sort called "higher critics" today; or even beyond them, they might be termed to some extent agnostic,—their faith considerably resembling that of the "Reformed Jews" of today. They believed something of the divine promises, but expected them to be fulfilled in a partial manner and in a natural way. They evidently did not expect a supernatural Messiah. They did not believe in the resurrection of the dead. They denied that there are angels or any spirit beings not visible to flesh and blood. The chief priest at this time, we are told by the lesson, belonged to this party. He and his sect were filled with indignation against the new doctrine, for in every sense of the word it specially opposed their teaching—much more so than it opposed Phariseeism.

The expression, "the high priest rose up," does not signify that he had been sitting or lying down and merely stood upon his feet, but might more properly be translated "the high priest was *aroused*." He and his party, the Sadducees, had hitherto been content to very generally disdain the masses and their views, and to pay little attention to them as inferior in wisdom and judgment on such questions. But now seeing the interest being taken by the public in the apostles' preaching, which declared not only the resurrection of our Lord, but that through the merit of his sacrifice a resurrection to a future life would be provided for all, they were thoroughly "aroused." In the teachings of the apostles they were meeting with a logic which they had never encountered in arguing with the Pharisees. Accordingly they again sent and laid violent hands upon the apostles and put them into prison.

(19-23) In harmony with the other miraculous interventions of Providence at that time, for the establishment of the church, the Lord wrought a miracle for their deliverance from prison; but instead of telling them to flee for their lives, he instructed them to go immediately again into the temple and preach as before; and this they did, going early in the morning. Great was the surprise of the General Synod or Great Council of the Jews, which had been convened for the purpose of condemning the apostles, when they learned that the prisoners were not in prison, but preaching as before in the temple.

(24-26) The officials were in consternation. It was bad enough to have men teach the gospel with such power and demonstration as they could not gainsay or resist, but to find that these men, even when shut up in prison, got out again by miraculous power, was enough to startle them, enough to make them consider afresh whether or not they might not be fighting against God. But they were self-willed men, not in a condition of heart to be influenced by anything, ordinary or extraordinary, which still left them their place and power. They would continue their investigation and endeavor to stop the preaching of the Gospel, consequently the apostles were arrested again; but this time with great moderation, for fear of the people. The rulers were beginning to feel that an impression was being made upon the people, and that in proportion as the new doctrine progressed they as teachers and rulers fell into disrepute. Indeed, so clearly did the apostles state the matter that those who believed their teachings could not well regard their spiritual rulers in any other light than that of murderers—murderers of the Messiah, the "Prince of Life."

(27, 28) The language of the Council to the apostles when they were arraigned indicates that they realized the situation when they said, You evidently "intend to bring this man's blood upon us,"—to make the people think that we are responsible for his death.

(29-32) The answer of the apostles shows that they were courageous men. They did not deny their preaching, nor its logical inference as understood by the rulers, for it was so. They merely said: "We ought to obey God rather than men." God sent us to preach the gospel, to tell the truth about this matter, and we have merely followed divine instructions. How beautiful, how reasonable, how consistent! There was no braggadocio in the apostles' language. They did not say, You brought us more carefully today than yesterday; you are getting a little afraid of the people; you have found that you cannot keep us in prison, for our Lord will deliver us; you are perhaps getting a little in awe of us by this time. They did not say, We will denounce you still more before the people and raise an insurrection and overthrow your power as sacerdotal rulers. Nothing of this kind; merely the unassuming statement, We have merely obeyed God in what we did.

A VALUABLE LESSON FOR OUR DAY

Then follows another discourse similar to the one given the previous Council, explaining about Jesus, his resurrection and exaltation to divine place and power, and to be the Saviour and pardon the sins of Israel. They wound up their testimony by citing them the holy Spirit which operated through them as corroborating their witness respecting our Lord, his character, his resurrection, his present glory, and his power to save unto the uttermost all that come to the Father through him.

There is a valuable lesson here for all servants of God today. We too have a commission from the Lord to preach the gospel, and if we would be approved and hear his "Well done, good, faithful servant," we must obey God rather than men. Should faithfulness to God bring us into conflict with the religious great ones, we are to be bold for the truth, but moderate and humble in manner and language. Children of God are never anarchists, lawless; and their opposition to human arrangements must only be because moved thereto by higher, divine laws and arrangements.

LETTERS FROM DISTANT COLABORERS

Russia.

MY DEAR AND BELOVED BROTHER RUSSELL:—At the close of the year I cannot help thanking you for the spiritual pleasure you are rendering me by your esteemed journal, ZION'S WATCH TOWER, which I receive regularly. It is to me like the merchant's ship—bringing spiritual food from afar. My constant prayer for you is that Jehovah our God may preserve you and Sister Russell for a long time that you may be able to continue the King's work to convince many souls of the true, blessed hope the whole world may have in the appearance of "this same" Jesus Christ. We are all well. With Christian love and best wishes to yourself and Sister Russell for a happy New Year 1897,

Ever yours in our Lord, JOSEPH RABINOWITCH.

China.

GENTLEMEN:—Four years ago I was brought into contact with the WATCH TOWER, and, reading a little here and there, I supposed it to be the organ of some peculiar sort of Universalists, outside the pale of orthodoxy, and threw the papers on one side.

However, I have recently read the three volumes of MILLENNIAL DAWN and am again going through the first volume more carefully and prayerfully; and I have been led to feel that, if this is God's truth, I want it at any cost. The Plan of the Ages magnifies the goodness of God ten thousand times more than any other system of interpretation or theology I have ever read.

I now turn up the old WATCH TOWERS of 1892 which I carelessly threw aside, and read them with avidity. I think inquiries should begin with the MILLENNIAL DAWN. I enclose $6, and wish you to kindly send me what you can for it. Yours faithfully, ———.

England.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—We are having some good times here. Our brother Hart has been amongst us and helped us on. Our class is gradually becoming larger. For the last three weeks our room (which holds about 25) has been almost too small for us. Our tracts (which the Tract Society so kindly sent us) are doing a good work. Brother Guard and myself often go to different parts to circulate them, and now and again a request comes for a DAWN. One brother has already had over twenty copies, as the result of a tract left under his door.

As we go about we find that the harvest is ripening fast; but the laborers are very few. Let us pray with all earnestness that the laborers may increase. I think we may want another supply of tracts soon. This is a very poor neighborhood, and we have had to loan many DAWNS. Yours in Him,

W. THIRKETTLE.

Australia.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I am deeply thankful to say that we are still holding fast to the truth, and endeavoring to the best of our ability to spread it amongst others. It seems almost miraculous that any should be able to stand, when all the delusions and snares that abound everywhere are taken into consideration; but by the grace of God alone, certainly not by any special ability or firmness on our part, we are thankful to be in the liberty of the truth.

Our work here is moving, though we are not able to chronicle any very remarkable success, if such is to be gauged by the general standard—numbers, etc.; but we are conscious of an increased interest generally, and a joyful acceptance here and there. We earnestly trust the Lord will graciously increase the number, but, dear Brother, as you well know, this is a hard battle; foes within and without are to be met constantly; and we have the ever present consciousness of our own utter weakness and unworthiness. But oh, what a blessed comfort the truth is! How it makes every cross lighter, every problem luminous, in very truth. I know not how I should live through this present period did I not possess its healing and life-giving support; but the sweetest comfort of all is that God is perfect Master of the situation, and that all things will be brought to the best interests of his creatures. If the eternal happiness or woe of our fellow men were absolutely dependent upon our efforts, what a terrible thing life would be; but God and his blessed Son are a thousand times more anxious for the well-being and happiness of mankind than any mortal. With brotherly love to all the brethren and sisters, from Bro. Flack and myself,

Yours in love and service, ALFRED PEARSON.

Scotland.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—The amount of blessing I have derived from studying the Bible, helped by the DAWNS, I cannot describe. Before I knew of them, I plodded wearily through "Butler's Analogy" and "McCulloch's Calvinism" and I might truly say, hundreds of other books, in search of something to satisfy me that Christianity was not cant. I must confess that though I had an earnest desire to know God, and though it is many years since I was converted, yet I did not *study* the Bible, but only *read* it now and then.

I have been careless of God, but he has not been careless of me; I have been often unfaithful, and he has ever kindly rebuked me. Now I see his love clearer; now I grasp heavenly things more tenaciously and dare not let go even for a moment. I fail in many things: it grieves me to fail in any thing; and I thank God for his many tokens of love and forgiveness of my follies. Blessed be God for the gift of memory which, though it shows me my sins and shortcomings in the past, also points out the many blessings my poor unworthy self has received in Christ Jesus.

In endeavoring to prove to many professed Christians that "hell" does not mean eternal torture, they have nearly one and all triumphantly pointed to the parable of Lazarus and the rich man. Now, in addition to using your arguments, I have often put the following question, in order to prove that Jesus simply used the story as an illustration, and did not tell it as an actual reality: "Was there any member of the human family who died and went to heaven before Christ died on the cross?" I point out that Jesus tells the story of what happened in the past—"There *was* a rich man," etc. If they say "Yes," I show them they deny that Christ is the only Way to heaven, and this staggers them. If they answer "No," they condemn their own belief and they stand confounded.

Yours in Christ Jesus, STEWART J. BELL.

[Our Lord said, "No man hath ascended to Heaven save the Son of Man."—EDITOR.]

Denmark.

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN IN CHRIST:—I was greatly rejoiced over the good news of your dear letter received a few days ago. I have not been so glad for a long while as when I read the statement of my account and saw how good the Lord had been to me that he had put it into some good heart to help me over the great debt I had gotten into. "Thank the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." It was the best news you could tell me just now; and I must heartily thank you for it, and pray that God will bless you and the dear brother who has been such a great help to so many of the Lord's servants. The WATCH TOWER for Dec. 15th received today and most of it read—with delight. I am so glad with the truths it presents and am perfectly in harmony with you; it is so good and grand to me, and I prize it above money or anything else. I thank the Lord that he has ever brought me in contact with the blessed good tidings proclaimed from God's Word. I know it is the plain truth, and it is my heart's desire that I might live in the way that is most pleasing to God, and in all things be subject to the will of God, our blessed heavenly Father.

It is becoming more and more light for me since I commenced to hold little meetings here in Denmark. We meet every Friday evening and have Bible readings with explanations, prayer and praise, and it has been very profitable to myself as to many of the dear Christians that have been attending. The circulation of Danish and Swedish tracts and DAWNS progresses, and although the results are not so great as we could wish, nevertheless the truth is spreading and finding some of the Lord's jewels. Your brother and fellow-servant in our dear Lord, JOS. S. WINTER.

Colombia, Central America.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Your very kind, loving and refreshing letter bearing date of the 19th ult. is duly received; also that containing Invoice, etc. We are truly glad that Brother Maxon arrived safely and gave you a clear description of the state of affairs. We are truly thankful for kind proposition made. We rejoice in Brother Hay's good fortune, of which we are partakers. How blessed are they who, possessing this world's goods, turn the same to good account.

Now, dear Brother, contrary to misunderstanding through communication concerning preaching, we had properly begun with it among the unintelligent, if by any means they could be aroused to an interest in securing DAWN, which would preach more lasting sermons. Being totally blinded, the people exhibited no appreciation for the truth, and we withdrew. We discern the necessity of associating preaching with the circulation of the DAWN. We gather from "Suggestive Hints to Colporteurs" that a house to house circulation is preferable, though preaching may not be ignored; and we are again preparing to go out preaching. We are experiencing severe storming by the Adversary; but occasionally realizing a gleam of sunshine amid the storm. We are having daily manifestations of divine providence and favor.

Our warfare out here is manifold, having to fight against the depressed state of things, the depravity of our surroundings, our own internal and external conflicts, etc.; so that we must be very often at the throne of grace, to implore the aid of our sovereign Lord and Head. We trust you will not cease to pray for us. We believe that grace will be given God's people equivalent to, or much more than, the evil with which they are surrounded. Thank God, we are growing in grace. The beam is in process of being cast entirely out of our own eyes; then shall we be able to see the motes of others.

It affords us great joy to see the report for 1896 in last TOWER, and to know of the active interest taken in the work by the brethren and sisters everywhere. May we all continue faithful unto the end.

Yours in the hope of the high calling,

ISAIAH RICHARDS & LOUIS A. FACEY.

[These two brethren were formerly representatives of the American Bible Society. After they got hold of present truth and it got hold of them they could do no less than spread it and are now colporteuring for DAWN as "Bible Keys," preaching and circulating O. T. TRACTS. They are full-blooded Jamaica negroes.

Brother Maxon, a white man, converted by these brethren last year, called on us recently and gave a most excellent report of their zeal, patience, energy, devotion, ability and full consecration to the Lord.—EDITOR.]

Switzerland and Germany.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Inclosed you will find an order for books. My labors with translations into French continue. Meantime I am using the German literature and making efforts to reach some of the many Germans of Switzerland and Germany itself. I have sent out over 4,000 tracts and, praise God, here and there some are awakening and are writing for more reading matter. Have also put notices of M. D. into different papers, having received $15.00 from a brother for that purpose. Several booksellers are now offering it for sale; another puts it into his show-window; and with another I am corresponding about arrangements.

One editor of a religious Sunday paper printed the notice of M. D. twice free of charge. I sent him the three volumes. In the notice I offered to loan the first to all lovers of the Truth and received many a friendly request for the same, mostly from among the poor. My German correspondence is thus increasing. While my efforts have been chiefly among the Germans of Switzerland, I am of the opinion that there

remains much work to be done on the mainland of Europe.

The whole month of December I had almost daily some orders or requests for the German DAWN; some came from old Deaf Hospital women. It seems that a great hunger and seeking after the truth—to know more about the glorious Millennial day, the dear Gospel of the true kingdom and the wondrous plan of the ages—is prevailing in Switzerland.

A German periodical would be very appropriate at this time, containing TOWER articles and probably answers to correspondents; and thus the bond of fellowship amongst the true believers would be strengthened and the interest, I believe, much increased. There are a number scattered here and there who would rejoice much over such an undertaking and support it according to their means. We hope that something may be done soon. I took the matter to the Lord in prayer. Hope you will think favorably of the suggestion and give us your idea and advice in the matter.

The other day I received a request from a missionary in a neighboring city for the loan of some DAWNS for a number of earnest Christians. Thus the interest increases. Will close with saying that I am always glad to receive the TOWER, and constrained to give thanks for, and pray for the continuance of, the blessings and favors of God our Father and our Lord Jesus toward me and you all and those that are His in every place.

Yours in our dear Redeemer, ADOLF WEBER.

[Sister Mattern reports that while as a nurse in a hospital in Hamburg she introduced DAWN and that five other Sisters there are deeply interested in the subject and are having Bible-study meetings and suffering reproaches, being in danger of losing their positions. Sister Giesecke is also doing a good work loaning DAWNS, circulating tracts, etc., in Germany.

All things considered, it has been about decided that we will start a small (4 page monthly) German TOWER. The price will be 12 cents per year for single copies; 5 copies monthly for a year 50 cents; 12 copies monthly for a year $1.00. We shall be glad to hear from all of our interested German friends, soon as convenient, respecting their interest in this part of the one harvest work.—EDITOR.]

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VIEWS FROM THE TOWER

ETHICS OF SAINTS MISFITS ON WORLDINGS

We are living in a day when history is being made as never before. Before us lies an account from the Chicago *Times-Herald*, stating that at a meeting of the Chicago City Federation, recently, the secretary of the Bureau of the Associated Charities of that city declared that there are 8,000 families in Chicago actually starving to death; and that the President of the South Chicago Relief and Aid Society says, "There is greater poverty here than there was in 1893, for we are less able to care for the poor now than we were then." The pastor of the First Congregational Church declares also that "at every turn one finds an object of misery. People crowd to our services and beg for food for their children. This is the hardest winter we have had. We can get no work for the men."

Another account is from Louisiana, of which Congressman Boatman declares that there are one hundred thousand destitute people in the Northern part of that State on account of the failure of crops in that vicinity.

The London *Chronicle* sums up a total of eighty-four millions of the population of India affected by the famine, and says, "We are only at the beginning of the existing scarcity, which must now under any circumstances go on increasing until June next." And the famine has recently been supplemented by the Bubonic plague, which is making terrible ravages.

Before us also are accounts of the now celebrated Bradley-Martin dress ball, at which about eight hundred of the elite of New York City, and indeed contingents from various parts of the world were present in silks, satins, velvets and broadcloth—both men and women ablaze with jewels. The newspaper accounts tell us that this was the grandest affair of the kind ever witnessed on this continent; that the ladies and gentlemen who participated were dressed to represent kings, princes, queens and noble ladies of the 15th, 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, and that the entertainment as a whole cost $223,000.

The Rev. Dr. Rainsford, in whose congregation are quite a number of millionaires, found it his duty to warn his hearers that it would be very unwise to attend this ball, giving as the reason that at the present time there are many people in New York city who are in very straitened circumstance and that such a display of luxury and extravagance would surely excite and strengthen the envy and hatred already felt by many of the poor against the wealthy and aristocratic. This started quite a hubbub, and the opinions of many of the prominent ministers were sought and published in the daily press. Some agreed with Dr. Rainsford; some were fearful to express an opinion if they had one; and some took an opposite view, claiming that the expenditure of the money would be a benefit to the poor, etc. The Rev. Thos. Dickson, Jr., was one of the most pronounced in his difference of view, declaring, according to the public press, "If I had millions, would I spend all in charity? No! Why, the position is nonsensical. If I had millions I would build a boat that could go around the world and would spend solid years of my life in rounding out my education. If I should have one million of dollars, and if the public should dictate to me how I should spend it, I would say, as did a certain member of the Vanderbilt family, 'The public be d——d.'"

In these conflicting views respecting the responsibilities of wealth and the proper uses to be made of it, we perceive the grand confusion into which nominal Christianity has fallen, which unbalances its reason upon every subject. The continued failure in judgment upon such subjects arises from the fact that the Bible lays down certain lines and conditions of Christian responsibility which do not fit a merely nominal Christianity, hence the misfit in attempting to apply the terms and conditions of true cross-bearers to those who bear none other than diamond crosses—however polite, refined and educated the latter may be. Our opinion of those who patronize such extravagant displays is, that they are Christians merely in name—after the manner of the man who, when asked, Are you a Christian, sir? replied, "Well, I am not a Jew nor heathen; I presume, therefore, I must be a Christian."

Let us learn to distinguish in our minds between nominal Christians and those who bear about in the person the marks of the Lord Jesus,—who are fully consecrated to him; whose will is to do the will of the Father in heaven, and to finish his work. Such being fully consecrated to the Lord will have neither time, nor influence, nor money to spend in such extravagant displays as this bal-masque. The restraining influence upon such will not be the point chiefly suggested by Dr. Rainsford—lest the display excite the cupidity and envy of the poor;—nor will it be merely to parsimoniously save money in the hand, where it will do no person very much good; but the object will be to spend the time and the means in some better channel, calculated to bring greater and more permanent blessings and happiness, both to others and to themselves.

But those who have this consecration of heart, whether they have much or whether they have little, need not feel envious of the rich; nor indeed should they seek or expect to force "the children of this world," who are not actuated by the same motives of consecration to the Lord's service and appreciation of divine things, present and future, to act as they act in such matters. Let the worldly who have wealth spend it in luxury, and in any manner not immoral. This will not only circulate the money amongst the people, better than if it were hoarded in banks, but it will help to manifest more clearly than ever the difference between the consecrated and unconsecrated condition of heart and conduct of life, and thus it will make wider the breach between the true church and the worldly class which falsely under deception of false teaching bears the name of Christ but is none of his.

WOUNDED IN THE HOUSE OF (PROFESSED) FRIENDS

Dr. Abbott, of the Plymouth pulpit, Brooklyn, continues to lead along the paths of "higher criticism." In some lectures on "The Bible Literature," recently, he provoked his congregation to laughter by the amusing manner in which he made reference to the story of Jonah and the great fish, which he termed a "fiction,"—"the Pickwick papers of the Bible." The worldly-minded newspaper reporters could see through the absurdity of a man pretending to be a Christian minister and yet thus making light of the very basis of Christian faith—the Bible. The reports in the New York papers put the matter in its true light, and in consequence the Manhattan Ministers Association took it up at its

meeting and strongly rebuked the language. We are not to forget, however, that probably a large majority of the ministers in New York City, and in all large cities, are already in full agreement with Dr. Abbott along the lines of "higher criticism" and, so far as faith in the inspiration of the Bible is concerned, might be termed rationalists, agnostics or even infidels: there are good reasons for such convictions. We must therefore suppose that the Manhattan Ministers Association were not so much in opposition to Dr. Abbott's agnosticism, called "higher criticism," as to the public statement of this agnosticism in Dr. Abbott's mirthful vein. As a minister of this city once said to the writer, "It is very well for us ministers to study these subjects, but it is not *prudent* to tell them to the people."

* * *

Dr. Abbott, noting the criticism, made two very significant remarks: (1) "No minister should criticize another minister in public;" and (2) "I have every reason to believe the Plymouth Church is *an absolute unit* in supporting its pastor." The latter statement shows to what an extent this modern infidelity called "higher criticism" has already taken root and borne fruit among the people, the "laity." The former statement shows how ministerial etiquette is expected to intimidate and seal the lips of any disposed to obey the Word of the Lord and lift up their voice like a trumpet to show God's people their sins and dangers. Only those who fear to offend God rather than men will escape this influence which the prophet declares will make the majority like "dumb dogs, they cannot bark."—Isa. 56:10, 11.

Meantime, the Rev. J. H. Barrows, D. D., famed as the president of the Chicago Parliament of Religions, of similarly broad and indefinite ideas of the Bible and Christianity, is now lecturing in India, having for his topic, "The Harmony of Religions." Surely, it is these people who have repudiated the Bible, and incidentally all of Christianity except civilization and refinement, who probably see no reason why they should not as truly fellowship the deluded believers in the creeds of the Orient, as that they should fellowship those of us whom they believe to be the deluded believers in the Bible.

* * *

Another bold man who denies the faith and is yet "worse than an infidel" in that he still masquerades as a minister of the Gospel of Christ, while doing all in his power to undermine that Gospel, is the Rev. M. J. Savage, pastor of the "Church of the Messiah," New York City. One would think that few except those "of the synagogue of Satan" (Rev. 2:9) would enjoy or support such preaching. From his recent sermon, as reported in the New York *Sun* we clip the following malodorous morsel as a sample. He said:—

"Archæology has established that man has been on earth not for a thousand years or ten thousand, but for at least two hundred thousand. Evolution, as developed by Herbert Spencer, and biology, the province worked out by Darwin, are no longer the subjects for debate by educated and intelligent people, though prominent theologians, who show that they don't know what they are talking about by the first words that they utter, will discuss it. Man was not created in the garden of Eden or anywhere else, but began in the ooze of far-off primeval seas. What we know, then, means that there has never been any fall of man, but a continuous ascent. This one fact compels the complete reconstruction of all the theological theories of the past."

It is time that all who have faith in the Word of God and its message of a fall and a redemption by our Saviour's precious blood should be no less outspoken than are the enemies of the truth. Whoever denies the fall into sin, denies the redemption from sin and its penalty and such are no more Christians than are Hottentots or Mohammedans or other unbelievers.

We pointed out in 1879, in this journal, that the great "falling away" from the faith predicted of the close of this age would come along this line;—the denial of the need and of the fact of the *ransom*. The *cross* of Christ (the great ransom-sacrifice) is to the Jew a stumbling block and to the Greeks (the worldly wise) foolishness, but to us who believe it is the power of God and the wisdom of God.—1 Cor. 1:18-24

The true light, the true plan of God, is now clearly manifested for the succor of all who are truly his people. The true "sheep," as they realize the confusion, will turn attentively and humbly to the great Shepherd to listen to his voice to guide them. Such only will be guided and kept in his way, led to the green pastures and still waters of present truth. These will be delivered from the great delusions of this evil day, which, if it were possible, would deceive the very elect. All others we may expect will be more or less deluded or blinded. Only a remnant will escape the blinding influence now as in the end of the Jewish age.

CHURCH UNION

Along the same lines of "union" with anything and everything that will help to support our present social arrangement is a prominent article in the *New York Evangelist* which after giving a number of reasons for federation and coöperation among Protestants includes also Roman Catholics, and urges peace and fraternity with them, saying:—

"We differ from them in some points, but we cannot deny that they hold the main truths of our religion. [It is, alas! too true that Protestants hold still to many of Papacy's perversions of the truth.—EDITOR.] . . . . There is another reason why we should have a care how we disparage the Catholic priests, namely, that some day, not so far off in the next century, we may have to call upon them for help against political and social dangers. The late Professor Roswell D. Hitchcock has often said to me that the time might come when the Roman Catholic Church would prove the greatest bulwark and safeguard against the Socialism and Communism which have been imported into our country from abroad. That is what all Europe is afraid of at this moment—a cataclysm, not from above, but from beneath: an *earthquake* that will yawn so wide and so deep as to swallow up civilization itself. If such destruction sweeps over the Old World, it will not be long in crossing the ocean to the New. Let us be on our guard that we do not break down any strong barrier against it."

Thus we see how one error leads to another, and helps still further to blind and prejudice the mind. How many Protestants there are who are totally unable to see in the Papal system the fulfilment of the prophesied Antichrist, the result of the great "falling away" from the faith; because, having unscriptural views of the present social economy, they are drawn toward Papacy or anything else which will help to sustain the social structure with which all that they have and are is intimately associated;—their spiritual interests, the nominal church institutions and their temporal interests. Can we wonder that under the lead of "higher criticism" and under the pressure of the supposed necessity for the continuance of the present social order, the majority of the nominal church are drifting further and further away from the Bible and from its teachings—respecting Romanism as Antichrist; respecting the Babylon-confusion of sectarianism; respecting the social change to be inaugurated by the fall of present institutions and the erection in their stead and upon their ruins of the kingdom of God's dear Son? We cannot wonder at the tendency to fall away from "the faith once delivered to he saints." We find a general tendency to lose faith in the Bible and to rely upon human wisdom and the light of conscience merely, except among those who in some manner or degree are looking for the second coming of Christ and the establishment of his kingdom.

* * *

A Federation of Churches and Christian Workers has been formed in New York City, including educational and charitable institutions. The New York *Journal* says, "One hundred and forty churches and eleven such institutions are now included in the membership, and it is expected that the number will be doubled this winter."

BROTHER MOODY SOUNDS AN ALARM

The New York *Independent* publishes a lengthy account of what is termed the progress of Christianity during the past year, which makes an extremely favorable showing so far as denominationalism is concerned; but all familiar with such matters know that such reports are quite unreliable, that the lists of nearly every congregation contain names of many who are dead physically and of many others who have departed from all spiritual life and interest and who have not attended meetings for years.

Evangelist D. L. Moody has been looking over the reports of last year, and as a result sent in the following to the editor of the *Independent:*

"In a recent issue of your paper I saw an article from a contributor which stated that there were *over three thousand churches in the Congregational and Presbyterian bodies of this country that did not report a single member added by profession of faith last year.* Can this be true? The thought has taken such hold of me that I can't get it out of my mind. It is enough almost to send a thrill of horror through the soul of every true Christian.

"If this is the case with these two large demoninations, what must be the condition of the others also? Are we all going to sit still and let this thing continue? Shall our

religious newspapers and our pulpits keep their mouths closed like 'dumb dogs that cannot bark' to warn people of approaching danger? Should we not lift up our voice like a trumpet about this matter? What must the Son of God think of such a result of our labor as this? What must an unbelieving world think about a Christianity that cannot bring forth any more fruit? And have we no care for the multitude of souls going down to perdition every year while we all sit and look on? And this country of ours, where will it be in the next ten years if we don't awake out of sleep?

"I wish some of you editors of the influential papers, who are in close touch with the ministers and churches, would tell us what the matter is. Is this the result of what they call the 'Modern Criticism' of the Bible? Is this a specimen of the better times, when we get rid of the old stories about Moses writing the Pentateuch, and the sun and moon standing still, and the fish swallowing Jonah? How much of all this is owing to the politics our ministers have been preaching lately, and the talks on the labor question, and the stereopticon shows on Sunday evenings, and all these other things that have been driving out the blessed gospel of Jesus Christ? When ministers go into preludes on current topics, how can they expect any afterludes of conversions?"

Bro. Moody gives evidence of being awake to the real situation; but all the more, his expressions are thorny to the average minister and church member, and many are crying out against him. Like some of old they say, "Prophesy unto us good things!" or "Let us alone!"

"MODERN EXEGESIS" OR "HIGHER CRITICISM

It would appear that the theological colleges are becoming the very hot-beds of unbelief and repudiation of the Scriptures, under what is termed "modern exegesis" and "higher criticism." Professor S. I. Curtis, of the Congregational Seminary of Chicago, is the latest who has made himself a name and fame by some published articles in which he endeavors to refute Christ;—thus repudiating the interpretations of those prophecies given by our Lord and the apostles as recorded in the New Testament. Professor Curtis simply gives the Jewish interpretation of these prophecies; namely, that they referred to God's dealings with the nation of Israel. *The Interior* (Presbyterian), criticising Professor Curtis and defending the interpretations of prophecy given us by our Lord and the apostles, says:—

"The situation then is this: It is admitted by this new school of scholarship that the New Testament writers were all of the 'old school of exegetes,' that they all gave the weight of their authority to the exegesis which finds in the Old Testament specific, particular and personal descriptions of our Lord, his deity, his birth, history, sufferings, death and the divine purpose in his incarnation and vicarious sacrifice—and that the authority of our Lord and of the New Testament writers, in affirming this fact, has universally prevailed for nearly 1,900 years, but is now set aside as 'not in accordance with modern views.'

"They admit that what they denominate the 'old school of exegetes' included our Lord himself and his evangelists and apostles. But they say this exegesis did not originate with our Lord and the writers of the Gospels who found it prevailing among the Jews of their times, and were not able to free themselves from it. Besides, it was to the interest of our Lord and of the New Testament writers to employ the false exegesis which they found in the public mind.

"Thus are the Scriptures plowed, harrowed and sown with the salt of perpetual desolation. But let us remember that salt-plains and bitter waters are found only in arid lands. Where the rains fall and the white snows drift there are none. The showers of spiritual blessing, falling upon the church of God, dissolve and wash away these alkaline destroyers of spiritual life, and leave her fountains of water pure, her trees laden with fruit, and her vales waving with corn."

We are glad to see that the Bible has still some friends in the nominal church and that higher criticism has not perverted the judgments of all.

* * *

Since the so-called higher criticism of the Bible began in Germany, it is interesting to notice its progress there. Reliable authorities inform us that, "In all the faculties of the twenty Protestant Theological Universities of Germany, there is not a single representative of the 'older views' and traditional teachings of the church, in reference to the Mosaic origin of the Pentateuch, the integrity of the book of Isaiah, etc."

Professor Zockler of Griefswald is an acknowledged authority upon this subject. In a recent article in German he expresses himself about as follows:—

The Old Testament criticism is raging now with more intensity than ever before. The contending parties are the liberal or advanced and the conservative. The differences between these two schools of thought have as a consequence become sharply defined, and in some cases quite bitter, and the interest in the struggle is widening. Outsiders also are beginning to appreciate the fact that great issues are at stake; that the new views practically remove from the sacred books of the Old Testament the basis of revealed religion, the historic faith-foundation upon which the church has rested for more than eighteen centuries. The church in general is realizing the destructive consequences of the critical teachings of the Wellhausen-Kuenen school of thought. What began as a controversy respecting the Pentateuch twenty years ago has now become a contest of radical criticism covering the entire Old Testament, and a question of principle for the life of the church. The professor adds that the defendants of the "old views" are found in the ranks of the ministry only, and none of them amongst the university men.

* * *

Likewise the American college professors are leading in this attack upon the Scriptures. They seem to realize that they might live and die comparatively unknown, except as they may come into prominence by attacking the Bible. Professor Paul Haupt of Baltimore has begun a translation of the Bible in conjunction with certain other professors of this country and Europe.

These gentlemen make such bold statements that not only the world but modest and moderate humble-minded Christians are inclined to suppose that they must have found some very *positive information* upon which to rest such wonderful and positive claims. They even attempt to indicate when and which certain words, sentences and sometimes paragraphs were added, here and there, at various times and by various persons.

These gentlemen, of course, profess to be more wise as well as more honest than any who have ever undertaken such work before. Their edition of the Bible, they inform us, will be printed in various shades of color and thereby indicate different features of the text. Of course, the world is ready and waiting for any and everything that would cast discredit upon the Book which has successfully withstood the assaults of its enemies for many centuries. Consequently, it is not, surprising that the world-pleasing and success-seeking publishers of New York journals are very willing to advertise such works as these freely. Thus a New York Sunday paper of January 31st illustrates what the new Bible is to be, giving selections from Genesis, showing the coloring of the text as it will appear, heading the whole thus:—

"AMAZING DISCOVERIES CONCERNING THE BOOK OF GENESIS. IT IS A PATCHWORK OF FOUR OR FIVE WRITERS AND IS NOT THE FIRST BOOK OF THE BIBLE"

Few of those who read the bald and brazen claims of these modern wise men and their advertisers have any conception of the character of the information possessed by these schoolmen, which *authorized* their division of Genesis and other Bible Books into "patchwork." Have these gentlemen found the original manuscript of Genesis, and there seen the various additions they claim, in various styles of handwriting, some with more and some with less faded inks? Is it upon such evidences as these that they base their strong statements? No! They never saw the original manuscripts, nor has any one else now living seen them. Critics have access to nothing to which other men have not access today. Upon what, then, do they base their conclusions which they state with such positiveness? may be asked. We answer, They merely fancy that they notice a little change in the phraseology here and there. They find that certain words are used in one paragraph or section freely and that those words do not occur in another paragraph or at least are not so freely used. And on the strength of this flimsy foundation they decide, and declare with great positiveness, and unholy boldness, that the two paragraphs were written by different persons. They not only undertake to say about what time they were written, but presumably men of such keen discernment could almost tell what the men looked like who wrote the different passages.

The Scriptures do not declare that Moses was the *author* of the Book of Genesis in the sense that he wrote it of his own personal knowledge. It is to be presumed that since much of it was history, covering the two thousand years preceding Moses' day, the record may have been kept and handed down from father to son, some of it from Adam and Seth and Enoch, Methuselah, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and

Jacob. All that is claimed for the Book of Genesis is, that Moses was its *editor* and that he as a servant of God was granted a superior wisdom and grace in bringing together into proper form, thus, the items of past history and of divine revelation which God designed for his people—"that the man of God might be thoroughly furnished."

It is quite sufficient for those who have learned of the wisdom of God's Book from its *internal* evidences and harmonies, to know that the records of Genesis are in complete harmony with the entire Word of God; and that it was one of the Books of the Scriptures at the time our Lord prayed, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth;" that various of its items were referred to by our Lord and by all the inspired apostles, without the slightest suggestion that either the whole or part of it was unreliable or a "mere human patchwork." Anyone who will compare the account of creation as given in Genesis with any account of creation given in any of the so-called sacred books of heathendom will be convinced that it is as far in advance of them all as the daylight is brighter than midnight. And we hold that the account of creation in Genesis, rightly understood, is in full accord with all that science has been able to prove; although it disagrees with some things which science claims without a sufficiency of evidence. The harmony between the Bible account and the proved positions of science * was shown in a series of articles by T. J. Conant which appeared in our issues of Jan. 1, Feb. 1, and Feb. 15, '94.

* See also STUDIES IN THE SCRIPTURES, VOL. VI, Chap. 1.—Eds.

THE GERMAN WATCH TOWER

Our German friends express their joy at the prospect of having even a small monthly publication devoted to the spread of the truth amongst readers of German. Promises have been made of large subscriptions for gratuitous circulation. Accordingly we have made a very moderate scale of prices, as follows—

	America.	Germany.	Switzerland.
2 copies each month, a year.	25c	Mk. 1.30	Fr. 1.50
5 copies each month, a year.	50c	Mk. 2.50	Fr. 3.00
12 copies each month, a year.	$1.00	Mk. 5.00	Fr. 6.00

Postage included.

Those of the *interested* who by reason of accident or infirmity are unable to pay will be supplied free upon application. We believe that divine providence is guiding in the undertaking, and will proceed with it shortly. Let us hear from all who favor it at once.

A TRACT FOR HEBREWS

We have calls for a tract for Hebrews—to help honest Israelites to find the Lord, Redeemer and Messiah. We would like to hear from all who consider that there is an opening for such a tract; how many they could judiciously use and in what language it would best serve its purposes—English, German, Polish or Jargon.

THE UNDEFILED ONE

[This article was a reprint of that published in issue of September, 1885, which please see.]

THE FIRST CHRISTIAN MARTYR

FEB. 21.—Acts 6:8-15; 7:54-60.

"Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."—Rev. 2:10.

Apparently Stephen's martyrdom occurred not a great while after Pentecost, but the interim had been a period of considerable progress. At the time of the ascension "about one hundred and twenty" were reckoned as being in full and deep fellowship in Christ; ten days later at Pentecost three thousand converts were added; shortly after five thousand more as recorded in our last lesson; later (Acts 5:14) "multitudes, both men and women, were added to the Lord;" still later, "the number of the disciples was multiplied in Jerusalem greatly, and a great multitude of priests were obedient to the faith." (Acts 6:1-7) This period of gathering the ripe wheat and establishing them in the doctrines of Christ was a very necessary prelude to the period of trial, persecution and suffering which shortly followed. The persecution, however, was no less a divine mercy than the previous peace and prosperity: the divine rule for the Gospel church evidently is that each member shall be "made perfect through suffering." The stoning of Stephen was merely the beginning of the general persecution which in one form or another has continued ever since, and must continue until the last members of the body of Christ shall have proven themselves faithful even unto death and been accounted worthy of the crown of life mentioned in our golden text.

Stephen, it will be remembered, was chosen as one of the assistants of the apostles and was known as a deacon—minister or servant—the original intention being that the service should be chiefly with reference to the temporal interests of the church. His choice would indicate that he was considered at the time a man of ability, and that faithfulness to the work entrusted to him led on to still greater privileges and opportunities for service. Accordingly we find him in this lesson ministering spiritual things with imbuement of the spirit and ability closely approaching that of the apostles. He was full of faith and power, says our common version, and no doubt truly, but the oldest manuscripts render this "full of *grace* and power." Both were true, because he could not have had the grace and the power without the faith. "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even your faith." In Stephen's case the faith working by love had produced zeal for the Lord and his cause; and the faith and zeal blended with the spirit of holiness gave Stephen extraordinary grace and power, as pointed out in verse 8. And the same combination will produce like grace and power in all of the Lord's people in proportion as these elements of character are found in each.

Tradition has it that Stephen's ability as a speaker (verses 9, 10) brought him into special prominence and that as a religious logician he met with the learned men of his time, amongst whom it is said Saul of Tarsus was one. The Jews, while in a general sense one in religious matters, were nevertheless broken up into various little cliques and schools of thought, much after the manner of the denominations of Christendom today. The classes here mentioned as disputants with Stephen are supposed to have represented the advanced philosophies of that day, combined with Judaism; but all of their philosophy could not cope with the wisdom and spirit of the truth which were with Stephen. Naturally this led wicked hearts to envy, malice and hatred; for those who are not above all things lovers of the truth are always moved to more or less hatred when successfully opposed by the truth.

(11-14) Many have supposed that Stephen met his death at the hands of a mob. But this is incorrect. Those who were his enemies because unable to resist the force of his arguments had no authority to stone him, nor did they wish to appear before the people in the light of persecutors of their opponent. They therefore suborned or procured witnesses outside of their own cliques to bring charges against Stephen before the Sanhedrin and then while he was disputing with them the official representatives of the Sanhedrin came upon him and "caught him" and brought him before the council—as though caught in the very act of blasphemy.

At the trial the witnesses testified falsely in the sense that they misrepresented the words and arguments of Stephen, putting them in a false light. There was, nevertheless, probably considerable truth in the charge that Stephen said that Jesus of Nazareth would destroy their city and change the customs of Moses. Had they confined themselves to a strict statement of the matter as Stephen represented it, they would not have been false witnesses; but, evidently anxious to serve those who employed them as witnesses, they exaggerated Stephen's statements to the extent of misrepresentation of certain connecting facts and statements in his discourse.

(15) It is recorded that when the apostles, Peter and John, stood before a similar council, a short time previous, their judges marveled at their courage in view of the fact that they were unlearned men. So also Stephen was courageous. Notwithstanding the fact of his arrest, and that he was on trial, and that if found guilty the punishment would

be death by stoning, according to the law, Stephen was not daunted. Instead of a look of fear and servility, or of anger, malice, hatred and defiance, the record is that they beheld his face "as it had been the face of an angel;"—a face beaming with love, kindness, interest in their welfare, desire to do them good, of purity and holiness of motive, combined with humble confidence in God and fearlessness of men. We believe that to a greater or less extent this is the case with all who receive the holy spirit, in proportion as they progress in the knowledge, faith, love, zeal and character of Christ their Lord. This change does not come instantaneously; it comes gradually. The spirit of the world places the marks of selfishness and hardness upon the countenances of all the slaves of sin, in proportion as they are faithful thereto. But when the spirit of the truth is received and these become freed from the slavery to sin and become the servants of righteousness, the result is a proportionate displacement of the marks of slavery upon the countenance and an illumination instead, which more and more approaches the angelic. Look the worldly man or woman in the face, and see how the cares and battles of and for sin have left their traces: look then into the faces of those who are fully and intelligently the Lord's, and notice how the marks of care are superseded by a look of confidence and trust and peace proceeding from the hearty acceptance of their new Master's spirit. And this illumination will be found most remarkable and conspicuous when such saints are actively engaged in telling the good things, and particularly when opposing the error.

Stephen's discourse before the Sanhedrin (Acts 7:1-53) marks him as having been a man of great ability. It reads more like the language of the Apostle Paul than that of any other New Testament writer. And the Apostle Paul, then Saul of Tarsus, is supposed to have been one of his hearers, a member of the Sanhedrin.

The closing of Stephen's address (verses 51-53) laid upon the Jewish people, and especially upon the Jewish Sanhedrin as the representatives of the religious law, the full responsibility for the death of the "Just One"—as his betrayers and murderers. This pointed application of Scripture and facts, as might have been expected, only aroused the evil hearts of the judges. Of those converted by Peter's discourse it was said, "They were pricked to the heart;" but of these it is said, "They were cut to the heart" by the words of truth—the evil of their natures was aroused to the full, they gnashed on him with their teeth—they were exceedingly incensed.

(55-58) Full of the holy spirit, Stephen was wholly unmoved by their manifestations of anger. He was testifying for God and for the truth, and instead of fear of man his heart was brought into the closer sympathy and union with the Lord. The Lord knew all about the termination of the trial and what the sentence would be, and no doubt gave Stephen a vision of heavenly glory—of the Father, and of Christ at the right hand of his majesty. This no doubt was for the strengthening of Stephen's own faith for the martyrdom just at hand; and perhaps also intended to act as it did upon his unjust judges. His declaration of the vision he saw capped the climax of their indignation, at his supposed opposition to God and to Moses and to themselves as representatives of the Law. They construed this to be additional blasphemy—that Jesus of Nazareth, whom they condemned as a blasphemer, and whose crucifixion they had procured, was acceptable to God; and not only so, but made next to the Father—at the right hand of God, or place of power and influence. Using this as a pretext, they terminated the trial and executed the sentence of stoning—stopping their ears as though they would thus say, what no doubt some of them actually felt, that such an exaltation of Jesus next to Jehovah, far above Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the prophets was gross blasphemy which they could not justify themselves in hearing and felt bound to resent by stoning the one presumed thus to be guilty of the heinous sin of blasphemy.

According to the Law, those who heard the blasphemy did the stoning; and they laid their outer garments at the feet of Saul, which would seem to indicate that he not only consented to the verdict that Stephen was a blasphemer worthy of death, but that he was one of the leaders in the prosecution, as well as an influential man in the Sanhedrin.

(59-60) Without attempting to dissuade them from their course, Stephen offered up prayer to the Lord, and a beautiful prayer it was—not only for the preservation of his spirit, but also that the sin might not be laid to the charge of his murderers.

Thus he "fell asleep." This testimony respecting Stephen is in full accord with the testimony of other Scriptures. Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the prophets "slept" with their fathers in death; and the Apostle, after enumerating some of the faithful ones of the past (who were stoned, etc., in hope of a better resurrection), grouping them all together, says (Heb. 11:39, 40), "These all . . . received not the promise; God having provided some *better thing for us*, that they without us should not be made perfect." They all are represented as sleeping and waiting for the morning—the resurrection morning—the Millennial morning—the morning of which the prophet David spoke, saying, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning;" the morning of which the prophet Job spoke, saying, "Hide me in the grave until thy wrath be past [the reign of death during the present age with all of its concomitants of sorrow, trouble and pain, are evidences of divine wrath]. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands." Our Lord, speaking of the resurrection morn, the same great day of awakening from the sleep of death, corroborates Job's statement, saying, "All that are in the graves shall hear his voice and shall come forth." (John 5:28, 29) Stephen slept with the others, but as one of the overcomers of the new dispensation he will have a share in the first resurrection (Rev. 20:6), and thus awake earlier in the morning than others not winners of the prize of the high calling of this Gospel age.—Psa. 46:5, margin.

SUFFERING WITH CHRIST STILL NECESSARY

The expression, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit," signifies that Stephen understood that the spark of life, the spirit of life, was passing from his control; and by this expression he gave evidence of his faith in a future life, committing it wholly to the care of him who redeemed him from the power of the grave and who is shortly to deliver therefrom all who trust in him.

Stephen's faithful witness unto death was followed in turn by that of many others likewise faithful unto death and heirs of crowns of life according to the promise. The beneficent influences of the Gospel of Christ have since Stephen's day so permeated the civilized world, and so affected it, that the followers of Christ are not at present in danger of being stoned to death for preaching his Gospel. Nevertheless, the Apostle's words still hold good, "All who will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." It is still necessary to suffer with Christ, if we would be glorified with him and share his coming kingdom. But the persecutions of today are more refined than in any previous period. The faithful today are not stoned with literal stones or shot with literal arrows or literally beheaded, but it is still true that the wicked shoot out arrows at the righteous, "even *bitter words*," and many because of faithfulness are reproved and slandered and cut off from fellowship—beheaded for the testimony of Jesus. (Rev. 20:4) Let all such emulate Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Let their testimonies be given with radiant faces like his. Let their eyes of faith perceive Jesus at the right hand of the majesty on high as their Advocate and Deliverer. Let their words be with moderation as were Stephen's, and let it be true of them, as written of him, "full of grace and power" and "filled with the holy Spirit."

PERSECUTION OVERRULED FOR GOOD

FEB. 28.—Acts 8:1-17.

"They that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the Word."—Acts 8:4.

The tendency of the early believers, as we have seen, was to gather together—to swarm. This was evidently in harmony with the divine program, to foster and establish the church in the religious capital of the world. Those first few years were evidently designed of the Lord to permit the church to put on the armor of God, to grow from babes in Christ, by the use of the sincere milk of the Word, and afterward by its strong meat, up to the stature of Christian manhood, thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work. This gathering at Jerusalem was in harmony with our Lord's direction before his ascension, when, after instructing them to preach the Gospel, he added "beginning at Jerusalem." But now, Jerusalem having had its full period of favor, the church having been rooted and established, the divine plan led on to a wider work; and the persecution which arose at the time of Stephen's martyrdom became very general in the city of Jerusalem, and very grievous, and led to the flight of many of the faithful who, we are told, went

everywhere, especially throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria. The apostles no doubt considered it a part of duty that they should remain at Jerusalem as a kind of center of influence; partly because they had not yet fully learned the lesson that the gospel they preached, although to the Jew first, is also to the Greek and the whole world.

(3) Saul of Tarsus was an energetic man, on whichever side of a question he stood. When an opponent of the Lord Jesus and his church and gospel, he was its most active enemy, and we cannot doubt that his activity in the matter was backed, as he himself afterward declared, by a "good conscience," which believed that he "verily did God service" in opposing what he considered to be the sect of the Nazarene. God seems to be specially on the lookout for just such earnest characters, and they are far more certain to get the truth than are the cold, listless and indifferent kind who neither love nor hate either righteousness or sin. Peter and James and John were of this positive and strong character, and they with the Apostle Paul, consequently, were the ones most freely used by our Lord in conveying the blessings of the gospel to us and to the world.

(4-13) It will be noticed that in the primitive church there was no such distinction of class as there is in the nominal church today. There was no division into clergy and laity, but they were "all one in Christ Jesus." The division of the church into clergy and laity took place when the great falling away came, which developed into Papacy; and from that baneful influence many have not yet fully escaped. All of the early church were preachers, and if persecuted they went everywhere, preaching the Word. An instance is given respecting this preaching. One, Philip—not the Apostle—did successful work in a city of Samaria and was used of the Lord in casting out devils and healing the sick, the means then in use for drawing attention to the gospel. The results of his preaching were marvelous—even Simon the sorcerer became a believer.

Sorcery, witchcraft and enchantments of olden times were manifestations of Satan and demons for the delusion of mankind, and were strictly forbidden under the Mosaic law. The same evil spirits in more recent years have slightly altered the character of the demonstrations, and so-called Spiritualists are their "mediums." The change is merely made in conformity to the changed conditions, and both are to be reckoned amongst "the works of the flesh and the devil." There can be no fellowship between the power of the adversary working in his agents for witchcraft and Spiritism and the power of Christ working in his agents and representatives and through the Word of Truth. The two are in opposition, however much at times the evil may claim relationship to the good. So it was in Samaria, as related in the lesson: the Gospel opposed the doctrines of devils propagated through witchcraft and sorcery, the effect was to make the people *free*, and even Simon the medium was convicted and professed outwardly a conversion and was baptised.

Philip's discourse is but briefly outlined, but it was along the same lines as the discourses of the apostles noticed in the previous lessons. He preached the "things concerning the kingdom of God." How fully he explained these things—that the kingdom would be a spiritual kingdom, that flesh and blood could not enter it nor even see it, and that not the Jewish nation would be heirs of that kingdom with Messiah, but only such as become believers in Jesus, devoted to him and suffering with him, thus attesting their loyalty to the divine plan. We cannot doubt, however, that Philip preached the second coming of Messiah to establish and exalt with himself the kingdom heirs now being sought out, and subsequently through that kingdom, to bless the world of mankind. We cannot doubt that he urged them to believe in Christ, and by a consecration to him to become joint-heirs with him in the kingdom, if so be that they suffer with him, that they might also reign with him. Nor did his preaching omit the things pertaining to "the name of Jesus Christ," and connecting his name as Messiah with all the Kingdom hopes which were before the Jewish mind. We doubt not that he pointed out to them that the names of Moses and of Abraham and of the prophets, although great, were insufficient for salvation—that there is none other name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved.

(14-17) It is worthy of note that Philip the evangelist, although possessed of the holy Spirit and possessed also of certain gifts of the Spirit, did not possess the power to communicate such gifts to others. Evidently that power resided only in the twelve apostles—Paul being the twelfth in place of Judas. Consequently, two of the apostles were sent to lay their hands upon the believer and to communicate the gifts of the holy Spirit.

After seeing the wonderful gifts and powers which the apostles were able to communicate, and no doubt after he had received a gift from them himself, Simon the sorcerer offered the apostles money in order to be endured with this apostolic power of communicating gifts of the Spirit to others. Hence the name, "simony," given to any attempt to purchase spiritual powers. Up to this time Simon had passed for a thoroughly converted man; but on the strength of this evidence of his non-appreciation of spiritual things the Apostle Peter tells him with very great plainness of speech that he has neither part nor lot in the matter but is yet in the gall of bitterness—is still unregenerate—merely a spectator and not a participator in the spiritual things.

Alas! how many today, like Simon, are associated with spiritual things, but have neither part nor lot in them; who merely give their money in hope of some advantage, and not with an appreciation of the spiritual things.

THE ETHIOPIAN CONVERT

MARCH 7.—Acts 8:26-40.

"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus."—Acts 8:35.

We are not to suppose that up to this time the Gospel had been preached to any except Jews. The eunuch, the story of whose conversion is before us, was a Jew. The law made special provision by which an alien could become a Jew, and this Ethiopian evidently had availed himself of that provision. He was a devout Jew, an Israelite indeed, a man of influence and some wealth; his devotion had led him to the Holy City, to which hundreds of thousands came yearly from various quarters.

His sincerity as a worshiper of the true God was evidenced by his desire to know the will of the Lord, as indicated by his searching the Scriptures. It is to such that the Lord draws nigh and reveals himself: not by whispering to him an understanding of the passage in question, but by sending a Philip to him to expound the Scriptures; just as in the case of Cornelius, Peter was sent to tell him words of salvation that should be for the saving of himself and household. Philip was evidently a zealous servant of the Lord, and hence was used of the Lord in the especial manner recorded in this lesson; the Lord seems to look out for those who are of a ready mind, emptied of self and filled with his spirit, and zealous, to be used in his hand, and such are his special servants. Let us all more and more be emptied vessels for the Master's use made meet.

Philip's inquiry, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" was a very pertinent one; a question that might be applied to a great many Christian people today who, if they answered truly, would admit that very much of the Scripture is to them "as a book that is sealed"—some claiming that it is sealed, others claiming that they are unlearned and therefore unable to interpret. (Isa. 29:11-14) Would that more had the spirit of the eunuch—a desire to understand the Scriptures and to avail themselves of such humble instruments as the Lord may be pleased to send to them for their aid.

How the Lord drew the attention of the eunuch to the particular passage of Scripture which perplexed him is not recorded; but no better one could have been found as a text from which to preach Christ crucified, a sin-offering, a sin bearer, a ransom for all. And Philip improved the opportunity to preach Jesus as the fulfilment of this prophecy, the propitiation for our sins, by whose stripes we are healed. Whoever will read over the announcements of discourses for fashionable churches in almost any large city will be struck with the dissimilarity of the themes discussed from those upon which Philip and the apostles discoursed with so much power and with so great results eighteen centuries ago. And who will say that this has nothing to do with the admitted coldness and deadness in the nominal church? The Gospel which is the power of God unto salvation is not the gospel of politics, nor of social reform, nor of temperance, etc., but the Gospel of salvation from sin and death by a Saviour who has bought us with his own precious blood.

Philip's directness of discourse is worthy of note. He did not ride along in the eunuch's company avoiding the principal theme, making inquiries about Ethiopia, the condition of crops, the business outlook, etc., but, as having a par-

ticular business to attend to as a servant of the Lord, he got to preaching immediately. But then, the eunuch was an attentive inquirer. As a Jew he had been waiting and hoping and praying for the Messiah and his kingdom. He knew of certain passages of Scripture which extolled the glory of that kingdom and the blessings that would flow from it: other passages which seemed somewhat in conflict he did not understand, and now an explanation had been offered to him which in every sense of the word fitted the prophetic statement and reconciled all differences. What else could he or any honest man do than accept the facts of the case? Quite possibly indeed he had already heard of Jesus, and possibly had heard this very Scripture referred to as fulfilled in him.

Now that the matter was set clearly before his mind—what it meant and how it was fulfilled—he wasted no time in acknowledging Jesus the Messiah. He straightway inquired whether or not anything hindered his espousal of the cause of the Nazarene and his recognition as one of his disciples by baptism? We should mark also the directness of Philip's answer. He did not say, "You will have to go to the mourners' bench and be prayed for, quite a while, before God will accept you;" nor did he say, "The proper thing for you to do is to join this or the other denomination after you have studied its catechism and made a profession of its lengthy man-made creed or covenant." On the contrary he said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may properly perform this symbol of union with Christ, burial into his death."

It is well to note also that Philip did not say to the eunuch, "It is sufficient if you have the real baptism, the real consecration of your life to the Lord, the burial of your will into the Lord's will, and you need not perform the *outward symbol in water.*" Philip said nothing of this kind; nor had he or anyone else authority to thus offset the word of the Lord and the apostles, directing all believers to thus symbolize their faith and consecration. It is worthy of note, also, that Philip did not say to the eunuch, "I will go yonder and fetch a little water in the palm of my hand, and sprinkle it upon your forehead;" but the record says that "they both went down into the water" and came "up out of the water."

In what manner the Lord by the spirit caught Philip away is not stated, but we should remember that this was at a time when means of locomotion were limited and when God was pleased to exert his infinite power in various ways in connection with the establishment of his church.

LETTERS OF INTEREST

Indiana.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I feel that I owe you an apology for my long silence, and wish to say that it has been more carelessness on my part than anything else. I have felt less the necessity of writing you often since others of our company have written, and in this way you heard from us, and we from you.

We have just had a week of meetings: meeting every evening for counsel, prayer and song, in which all were benefited who attended, and this included nearly all our number, though some were kept away through sickness and other causes over which they had no control. We all felt the need of a closer walk with our dear Lord, and to this end sought a deeper work of grace in our hearts, and the Lord responded to our petitions by meeting with us and granting to all that sweet subtle communion which every true child of God has experienced and yet cannot describe. I can see the benefits of the meetings already in the increased zeal of those who attended. Some are suggesting that we hold a series of public meetings, and it looks just now as though the way would open up for a series of meetings in Pool's Hall, about 1½ miles east of here.

The churches in Indianapolis are making a special effort now to arouse a fresh interest in religious things. The ministers all seem to realize their spiritual deadness, which has come (as one of them expressed it to me) like a mighty wave over all the churches. I attended the meeting of the Indianapolis Ministerial association the 1st Monday of this month. I noticed by the papers that the subject for discussion was, "Is there a lack of spiritual life in the churches? and what are the causes? and the remedy?" The gentleman who had the first part of the subject did not even debate the subject but spent the first four minutes of ten allotted to him in reading and commenting on statistics which might well arouse them to greater energy. The next speaker was Pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, and said among other things that the increase for the year just closed in four of the leading Presbyterian churches of the city was less than 4 per cent. and that in 1600 (if I remember rightly) of the Presbyterian churches of the country there were no accessions whatever. A dark picture, surely, to all those who believe that all efforts for the salvation of the race will end with this age.

This same speaker mentioned the fact that he had attended Moody's meeting in New York about 20 years ago and that then the Word seemed to go out with power and take hold of the people, especially church people. But that in Moody's recent meetings, which he had attended also, there seemed to be a total lack of power, for which he was unable to account.

The gentleman who took the next phase of the subject, *i. e.*, "What are the causes of this deadness?" after naming various causes, mentioned as perhaps the principal cause a tendency among ministers to speculate on various subjects "thereby dividing the thought and confusing the minds of their audience." He mentioned as a particularly detrimental subject of speculation, "The Second Coming of Christ," and then added by way of apology "that he did not wish to criticise those who had views upon this subject, as doubtless some present did, but as for himself he had no views at all." Poor "blind leader of the blind!" Had he the least conception of the depth of shame involved in such a confession as this, falling from the lips of a so-called minister of the Gospel, he would surely bow his head in shame. But no, as Paul puts it, he seemed to "glory in his shame;" and not a minister present raised his voice in rebuke of such shameful ignorance. The gentleman who took up the last division of the subject, whose business it was to suggest a remedy for existing evils in the church, was a "holiness man" and, of course, suggested a baptism of the "Holy Ghost." Some seemed to coincide with this view and feel their own deep needs, while others sleepily listened and seemed to think that everything was in a fairly prosperous way, though none of them were very hilariously jubilant. Surely, "the wisdom of her wise men shall perish."

The last speaker mentioned the fact that he too had been present at Moody's meetings in New York 20 years ago, and that he had recently heard from friends in the East who attributed Moody's lack of power to his speculations as to the Second Coming of Christ. Is it not significant that two out of three speakers gave as the most potent factor in producing this "spiritual deadness" and "lack of power" the agitation of the second coming of our Lord? I think it is. It seems to be an index showing how unpopular this subject is among the D. D's. It seemed so queer to me: everybody addressed every other body as Doctor. I could not help thinking how ridiculous it would sound to say, "Doctor Peter," and what the impetuous old fisherman would have thought. I really felt sorry for these men. But as I witnessed their anxiety and seeming helplessness, I felt like suggesting that preaching the gospel would be an experiment worth trying at least as a remedy for the deadness of their churches.

With Christian love, in which Sister Owen joins, to yourself and Sister Russell, I am as ever,

Yours in our dear Redeemer, C. A. OWEN.

Ohio.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—We have had some very peculiar experiences of late. We have been holding public meetings (lectures from the chart), and announced them in the papers. At our first meeting a lady attended (a stranger) and at the next brought along four more. After attending four meetings they desired us to fill an appointment at one of their homes, which I did. The room was well filled; subject, "The Church, and Her Steps to Glory;" and they all expressed themselves as well pleased, and have asked for regular meetings.

This is all a great surprise to us. We learned that there are some fifteen or twenty, nearly all women, who have come out of the churches and are holding meetings among themselves. No objections have been offered to any of our views, but many intelligent questions were asked; reading matter was acceptable, and we distributed a lot of tracts.

Your brother in Christ, S. J. ARNOLD.

CONTENTMENT

"Charge not thyself with the weight of a year,
Child of the Master, faithful and dear;
Choose not the cross for the coming week,
For that is more than he bids thee seek;
Bend not thine arms for tomorrow's load—
Thou may'st leave that to thy gracious God;
Daily only he saith to thee,
'Take up thy cross and follow me.'"

VIEWS FROM THE TOWER

DANGER OF THE "UTTER COLLAPSE" OF FOREIGN MISSIONS

The *Missionary Review of the World* has been edited by Rev. A. T. Pierson, D. D.. for ten years. Its editor is well posted in everything pertaining to missions, has written a number of books and pamphlets and delivered hundreds of addresses on this subject. Its opinions therefore are entitled to the greatest respect. In its January issue it declares:—

"Without claiming any undue capacity for observation, sagacity in discernment, or accuracy in judgment and induction, the calm conclusion reached after thirty years of study of this theme and of active participation in the actual machinery of missionary enterprise, is, that at no time during the half-century now closing have *missions to the heathen been at greater peril of utter collapse!* Wide doors are open, immense fields invite, some soil calls for the sower, while harvests demand the reaper; we never knew so well how much territory there is to be possessed, and how deep is the need of mankind; never had the church such opportunities and facilities; never such large numbers and wealth at her disposal; and yet, with doors open wider than ever, and candidates offering in unprecedented numbers, the giving of the people of God is so utterly inadequate and disgracefully disproportionate, that where every divine sign of the times is a call for rapid advance and expansion, our drums beat a retreat, and our boards loudly call for retrenchment!

"And—what is to our view most fraught with risk—there is a growing apathy about the whole question of the world evangelization, which seems to argue a decay at the very root of missionary enterprise. The causes for this we can not for ourselves either doubt or deny. On one hand there is a *laxity of doctrine*, which at least leads disciples to indulge in a vague 'external hope,' like Dean Farrar, that the heathen are not really lost without Christ: and on the other hand, there is a *laxity in practice*, which leads to a practical recognition of all religions as belonging to a universal brotherhood of faiths ,and to the fellowship of their representatives as entitled to our 'Christian charity,' forgetful of the famous proverb quoted by Dr. John Ryland to Robert Hall, that 'charity is an angel while she rejoiceth in the truth, but a harlot when she rejoiceth in inquity,' embracing those whom she should rather pity than weep over."

The following is given by the same journal as a survey of the condition of the nominal church which has led, and is leading, to this threatened "utter collapse." It declares the cause to be the decline of "vital godliness." It says:—

"Look at the church pervaded by sectarianism, sacramentalism, ritualism and Romanism, and an even more fatal secularism. Behold the awful lack of gospel preaching, the reckless extravagance that reigns and practical denial of stewardship, the low level of piety, the prevalence of prayerlessness and the encroachment of virtual infidelity. See the church confronting the world with its more than thousand million unconverted souls, scattered over a wide unevangelized territory, with its unoccupied and neglected fields continental in breadth; yet unable to grapple with the awful problems of society, conscious of a widening gap or gulf between itself and the world, yet unable to bridge the gulf, while the intemperance, licentiousness, and anarchy of society takes on a more and more revolutionary aspect."

* * *

It was necessary that the gospel should be preached in all the world, to every nation, *for a witness*, before the end of this age should come. This work, we believe, has been accomplished. We should be glad indeed if as good a civilization as our own could be carried to the uttermost regions of earth, but the civilizing and social uplifting of the world we clearly see from the Scriptures does not belong to this age, but to the next, the Millennial age. Those who are hoping for the conversion of the world along the lines of present missionary effort, or any effort possible under present conditions, are hoping against hope. Not only can they see such discouragements as are above pointed out by the *Missionary Herald*, a "danger of utter collapse" because of lessening of interest in civilized lands, but, on the other hand, they must look squarely in the face of the fact while their most sanguine and exaggerated estimates of this century's success with the heathen claims one million converts, the same period of time has witnessed a natural increase of those heathen peoples of over two hundred millions. Why cannot all true Christian hearts, which long for the blessing of their fellow creatures, see that there is something wrong with their expectations, which now after fifteen centuries are as far as ever from realization, so far as the complete conversion of the world is concerned? Why will they not turn to the Word of the Lord and there see with us that the divine purpose in this age is the election or selection of a Church, a "little flock," of which our Lord Jesus is the Head and of which all his fully concentrated and faithful ones are members? Why can they not see that this Church, through trials of faith and oppositions from the world, the flesh and the devil, and through much tribulation, is being prepared of the Lord to be "his Kingdom and priesthood," through which, clothed with divine power—glory, honor and immortality—God will be pleased shortly to bless all the families of the earth according to his original promise as made to father Abraham.—Gal 3:16, 29.

Those who have been blessed by the Lord with the light of present truth have no such cause of despondency as others; nor have they any lack for fields of work. The Chief Reaper sends us, as he did the disciples in the Jewish age, with the message of present truth—"the kingdom of heaven is at hand,"—not to the wild savages of foreign lands, but to the fields "white already to harvest"—to those who have already heard the gospel,—to gather the "wheat" into his garner before the "fire" of the great trouble shall come upon the "field"—the whole civilized world.

And wherever there are ripe grains of "wheat," there we believe the Lord is sending the sickle of truth. In our last issue we gave letters from some interested in present truth from the various quarters of the world, and we might have added to them others from South America, Africa and India. Wherever there are ripe grains of "wheat," thither we believe the Lord will send the separating present truth. It will be first of all a test as to loyalty to him, and the worthiness to be gathered into his "garner," as one of his faithful ones; secondly, if the test of faithfulness be passed successfully, it will serve to bless and uplift and strengthen, and to prepare the true believer with an understanding of many things that were, many things that are, and much respecting the things that are yet to be,—that he may not walk on in darkness and stumble into the ditch of unbelief with the masses.

RELIGIOUS AND SECULAR AFFAIRS COMMINGLING

The general tendency for religion and politics to draw together is illustrated by the recent decision of a New York supreme judge, denying a Jewish organization a certificate of incorporation because its annual meeting was fixed for Sunday. The journals of the larger religious denominations very generally approve the judge's decision, while the organs of the smaller denominations, and Hebrew papers, very generally, condemn the decision as unjust and an attempt to control by the power of the state questions that are purely religious. The smaller denominations very properly see that if the views of the majority are permitted to control in *any* religious matter, it will be an entering-wedge for almost absolute majority control in *all* religious matters and liberties. The *Jewish Messenger*, commenting on this decision, says:—

"It has served the purpose of again making the Jew appear as under proscription, and at the hands of a jurist, who, both by birth and training, was supposed to be above such bigotry. One cannot but feel ashamed that our age and city should witness such a revival of the blue laws. Perhaps Judge Pryor has been influenced by the recent opinion of the New York Presbytery as to the doubtful character of Jewish moral environment. Judge Pryor's ruling should not go unchallenged, and his violation of American civil and religious liberty merits a more effective rebuke than it has yet received."

THE ARBITRATION TREATY

The United States Senate has not yet confirmed the Arbitration Treaty between the United States and Great Britain; but there is every probability that it will be approved with perhaps slight amendments. The measure is extremely popular both in Great Britain and here, and that with all classes. The disposition with many is to consider this the beginning of universal peace, with Reason as the arbiter instead of the Sword. The suggestion is freely made that it will not be long before all the nations of Europe will practically disarm. In this, and in connection with the hope for "union" amongst Protestant denominations, the worldly church is looking for the realization of its ideal of the Millennium, when the whole world will be converted; not by the preaching of Christ, and him crucified, as the only name given under heaven or amongst men, but by *harmonizing* the Christian religion with the various religions of the world, saying, "There

is some good in every religion, and the important things are civilization and prosperity, with some outward form of religion."

Alas! how far short all this would come of the grand hopes set before us in the gospel—even if it could be attained. If the whole world were as peaceful and as unarmed as are these United States, and if the whole world had as great civilization and prosperity as have these United States, and if the whole world had as much formalistic and true religion as have these United States; alas, how far we would still be from the blessed condition for which our Master taught us to hope and to pray, when he said, "After this manner pray ye: Our Father who art in heaven . . . . Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

The following from the *Jewish Exponent* shows that the Hebrews are looking at the matter in a very proper light:

"THE BEGINNING OF INTERNATIONAL ARBITRATION"

"'And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain [kingdom] of the Lord's house shall be firmly established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and unto it shall flow all the nations. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; that he may teach us his ways and we may walk in his paths. . . . And he will judge among the nations and decide for many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning knives; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, and they shall not learn war any more."

"This prophecy of Isaiah and Micah dates at least as far back as the eighth century before the Christian era. At the end of the nineteenth century of the Christian era it begins to find actual realization in the affairs of two great nations.

"In presenting the treaty of arbitration between the United States and England to the Senate of the United States, President Cleveland intimates that the result reached may not meet the views of the advocates of immediate, unlimited and irrevocable arbitration of all international controversies."

How far from such an ideal the present measure is may be judged from those of its provisions which limit its duration to five years, and make it include but a limited class of subjects within its scope. Compare this with Isaiah's prophecy of universal and perpetual arbitration, disarmament and peace, under the guidance of divine justice and law, and then judge how far off yet are those "last days" of which the prophets speak. Over two thousand six hundred years have elapsed, and this is all the most enlightened and most closely affiliated of nations are as yet prepared for.

"Nevertheless, the President declares that this treaty cannot fail to be everywhere recognized as making a long step in the right direction, and will mark the beginning of a new epoch in civilization. If this be true, Israel's prophetic writings can hardly be considered obsolete. On the contrary, they promise to attain a new and increased importance from the fact that the policies they prescribe are now beginning to be practically carried out among the nations. As in many other fundamental principles, a remarkable unanimity is here seen between the teachings of Israel's faith and the highest ideals of the American people."

"As it was in the days of Noah;" men do not realize that we are now in the last days of this "present evil world [order]." The new dispensation is coming so differently from what they expect. Alas! how the bright hopes of this nineteenth century must shortly be dashed to pieces. What chagrin there will be as, one after another, present institutions shall be drawn into the vortex of the great time of trouble which is near at hand and hasteth greatly. The Lord has not only declared through the prophets that the sword shall be beaten into plowshares and the nations learn war no more, but he has also declared through the same channels that this blessed time shall be introduced by a time of trouble such as was not since there was a nation. And of that time of trouble it is declared that then many shall beat their plowshares and pruning hooks into spears, and the whole world be involved in the great battle. The battle will eventuate in the uttter prostration of the world in the zenith of its power and glory. But, praise God, those days of trouble will not be permitted to continue, else as our Lord declared, "there would no flesh be saved." For the sake of the elect—because of Christ, the elect Head, and the church, his elect body, and the acceptableness of the sin-offering—the kingdom of God shall be established under the whole heavens, to lift up and bless the groaning creation, and to grant eternal life and joy to all who will accept them under the conditions of the New Covenant.

Meantime even the blind can see that the common hopes of peace are not built upon a change of the controlling principles of human hearts from selfishness to love. For instance, note the fact that the French government appointed M. de Kerjegn to examine into and report upon the French Naval equipment as compared with that of Great Britain. He has filed his report, which, after pointing out the great superiority of the British Navy, urges a large increase of the French navy, and concludes thus: "The aim of every patriotic Minister of Marine ought to be to push on to the possession of a fleet capable of *ruining* the commercial supremacy of England at a given moment." Germany also is increasing her naval armament, so are the United States, Japan and Russia, while Great Britain feels bound to keep her fleet ahead of all, to prevent the ruination of her commercial supremacy. Evidently the lion and the lamb are not yet ready to lie down together in peace;—the lion must first get a new disposition.

Lord F. von Lüttwitz, writing recently in a Berlin journal, commenting on the determination of the German government to greatly increase its navy, says:

"A second partitioning of the world is at hand. We need only remember the dissolution of Turkey and the opening of China in order to realize what great opportunities for colonial enterprise [commercial warfare] still exist. Nor should the restless condition of some of the South American republics be forgotten, for these to many offer future advantages. But we will miss our chance again unless we have a fleet. We must become so strong at sea that nations which can afford to snap their fingers at our army cannot afford to ignore us in partitioning the world. We must have a navy, and we must not lose time in getting it. Our alliances are of no value in this matter. We cannot afford to go to war for the sake of some miserable little piece of land far from us, yet we will have to do so if we have no navy. It may be assumed that the next partitioning of colonies will be eminently peaceful. But unless we have a navy powerful enough to take possession of our share and to defend it, the maritime powers will not even consider us as competitor, and we will go out empty."

* * *

On the other side of the question a new factor is discovered. The soldiers of Europe are beginning to think, and are not so anxious as they once were to give up their lives at the behest of kings and princes. A recent dispatch from Brussels, which will be read with interest, is as follows:—

"The disaffection in the Belgian army, founded on the Socialist propaganda against the use of armed force, appears to be making headway. The *Soir* announces the discovery of organized Socialist clubs in barracks, whose members, while submitting to the rules of the service, are pledged to refuse active service should occasion arise.

"Inquiry in one large center has already revealed the existence of a club of this description, and seventeen non-commissioned officers have been suspended."

THE PROBLEM OF CHURCH UNITY

Under this caption the *Christian Statesman says*:—

"What we maintain is no mere speculative theory, away up in the ecclesiastical clouds, and impossible of realization in this matter-of-fact world. On the contrary, it is the simple, practical, Scriptural rule by which the church of Christ, according to her divinely ordained nature, is under obligation to order her earthly life. . . . We believe that the church cannot effectively meet concentrating hostility in her present divided condition, with her separate denominations often failing to coöperate and not infrequently working at cross purposes. We further believe that she will be *compelled in the near future* to search for the true solution of the problem of her imperatively needed organic unity. We are constrained, therefore, to point out what we are fully convinced is the remedy that must soon be applied for the healing of her sectarian divisions. . . . The church, like the state, is a social being made up of individual members. *Each of these collective beings, by divine ordainment, is clothed with authority in its appropriate sphere of action. And in each of these collective or social beings are found subjects of authority. Christ is the Sovereign Lord and King over both church and state. His Word, given in the sacred Scriptures, contains supreme law for each of these social bodies in its distinct sphere.*

"Due regard in the state for the law of Christ *secures for it the balance of political authority* and the liberties of the citizen, and thus the establishment and preservation of national organic unity. And in like manner due respect for the law of Christ will secure to the church and all her individual members the balance of ecclesiastical liberty and law and

consequent enduring organic unity. The admitted differences between the sphere and functions of the church on the one hand and the sphere and functions of the state on the other hand will not affect this analogy. Ecclesiastical authority wields no material sword. *Its penalties are spiritual.*"

It is seldom that we find the advocates of Church Federation so outspoken as this; but we admire honesty and frankness even in a bad cause;—and as our readers well know we esteem the movement for the proposed organic union of the churches and then their coöperative union with the state a very bad cause;—one fraught with danger to the liberties of all classes—but foretold in the Scriptures as associated with the great trouble with which the social and ecclesiastical order of this Gospel age will come to an abrupt end.

We deny every proposition of the quotation. (1) We deny that the church (collectively) is "*clothed with authority.*" On the contrary, we hold that the individual Christian is free from authority except that of the head of the true church—Christ. His fellows may advise with him or may withdraw from his fellowship, but they have no "authority" over him according to the Scriptures. Since there are none "clothed with authority," there can be no "subjects of authority." The object of Satan, and unwittingly of those whom he deceives, has ever been to deprive the individual Christian of the liberty wherewith Christ has made him free, and under one pretext or another to sink the individual in the mass, under human heads and authorities. Papacy is a woeful illustration of Satan's successes in this direction in the early centuries of this age; and the Protestantism of the sixteenth century, which never entirely rid itself of that influence, is now being drawn into the same snare.

(2) It is not true, as stated, that God's Word given in "the sacred Scriptures contains supreme law for each of these bodies." On the contrary, the Lord's commands and counsels and promises were first to the little nation of Israel only, and secondly to the peculiar people, royal priesthood and holy nation—the church called out of the world and begotten of a new spirit through that Word. And the Lord's words to the church are not as an organization but as individuals only. "If *any man* [individually] will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me. He that hath an ear let him [individually] hear."

So far from recognizing the state, the nations, and giving them laws, the Lord's Word declares that they are all "kingdoms of this world" and under "the Prince of this world"—Satan. And through the prophet he has pictured these Gentile governments or states as ferocious beasts, and told of their utter destruction at the time of the establishment of his Kingdom for which he taught us to pray, "Thy Kingdom *come!*"

(3) It is not true that "Due regard in the state for the law of Christ *secures for it* the balance of political authority." Quite to the contrary, the balance in politics often goes to the side of the corrupt and the saloon element. The history of the various so-called Christian States of Europe, written in blood, shows that none of them have ever been controlled by the laws of Christ, but all of them perforce on contrary lines. Christ gave no national laws because his kingdom is not of this world. He rules individually each citizen of *his* heavenly kingdom.

(4) The claim that such an *organized and dominating* ecclesiastical authority would need no sword but would merely execute spiritual penalties is delusive. This was Papacy's claim in the zenith of her power. For instance, she damned the Huguenots as "heretics," told how God would torment them in the future, and declared that "heretics" had no rights which governments or people were bound to respect, and promised eternal rewards to all who would oppose them. And when the French king, thus incited, entrapped and massacred them Papacy struck medals to his honor and made him a saint. Thus *spiritual penalties and rewards* was interpreted not very long ago. We do not presume that Protestant authority would at once become so arrogant, but in some form all dissenters would be considered "heretics" or "anarchists," and persecuted to the extent that public sentiment would sanction.

THE REAL IMPORT OF MODERN CRITICISM

The editor of the New York *Sun* has devoted considerable space to the discussion of modern criticism of the Scriptures, as recently publicly voiced by Rev. Lyman Abbott. The editor shows himself as ever to be a logician. Of course, his editorials have aroused opposition from many who seek to defend this modern infidelity. Referring to these defenders, the *Sun* of Feb. 9, says:

"They all miss the point, which is that if there is not supernatural authority for Christianity it becomes simply a system of moral philosophy, regarding whose soundness disagreement is justifiable and inevitable. It is not believed in as coming from God by supernatural revelation, but is treated as simply human in its origin, it will be criticized on its merits alone, as the Jews, for instance, criticize it, and as it was criticized by the Romans. The Romans opposed the Christian system and tried to destroy it as essentially inimical to the state and the established social order. They viewed the Christians and dealt with them as we now regard and treat Anarchists. If, then, the supernatural origin and character of Jesus are denied, his teachings will be examined in a light radically different from that in which their discussion has proceeded hitherto. They will cease to be the foundation of a religion imposing an obligation of belief as essential to obedience to God, and become debatable propositions made by a human teacher of philosophy, and therefore properly and necessarily examinable to determine their intrinsic value. . . .

"It is this destruction in which Dr. Abbott and his defenders are now engaged. If the Biblical story of Jonah and the whale is to be regarded as purely a parable, an allegory, whose actual occurrence was impossible and therefore unbelievable, Christianity must descend from its exaltation as a religion of divine authority, and drop to the level of a system of religious philosophy or speculation, of human authorship. If the story of Jonah is merely allegorical, a fable, every other Biblical tale, from the creation of Adam and Eve up to the supernatural birth and resurrection of Jesus, is likewise allegorical, for they conflict equally with the possibilities under merely natural law. In other words, the arguments of Dr. Abbott and his defenders shatter the whole fabric of religion built by faith, and put the Scriptural reports of supernatural occurrences in the same category with the tales of mythology. This is a conclusion which the theologians of the school of Dr. Abbott try to avoid, with a timidity which may be natural in view of their ecclesiastical relations, for it takes away the reason for their existence. . . .

"Our correspondents who discuss the case of Dr. Abbott, have no conception of the tremendous revolution in sentiment of which it is a symptom. All the infidelity of past periods has been of no consequence as compared with the present infidelity, of which, for the moment, he has made himself an example. It is an infidelity which strikes at the supernatural basis upon which Christianity rests, and therefore relegates the religion of Christendom to the position of mere mythology and fallible human philosophy."

We freely endorse the editor's arguments and his definition of modern criticism as the rankest infidelity.

* * *

The disposition of many to fail to discriminate on such subjects is witnessed by the fact that Dr. Buckley, of the New York *Christian Advocate* is rated as an utter repudiator of the Bible, worse than Dr. Abbott,—simply because he declared his disbelief that every word, punctuation and flyspeck of our English *translation* of the Bible is inspired. Nobody of sense could dispute his proposition. It is the *original* Scriptures that we hold were inspired; not the translations of it. Vastly different is Doctor Buckley's position from that of Doctor Abbott.

The start of modern criticism or "higher criticism" may be said to have been in the theory of Evolution—which is diametrically opposed to the Bible theory of the creation of man in God's likeness, his *fall* into sin, imperfection and death, his redemption by a ransom and the restitution to come.

But according to the following clipping from the New York *Tribune*, the most intelligent Christians are already perverts from the Bible faith to the protoplasm and monkey doctrine of Evolution, and hence to its associated doctrines known as "higher criticism." It says:

"Today, though evolution is not a demonstrated truth, and perhaps never will be, it is practically accepted by most intelligent Christians as the best explanation of life. . . .

"Quite as terrible at first seemed the blow which evolution aimed at the literal interpretation of the Scriptures. Most of those who first read *The Origin of Species* believed literally in the creation stories in Genesis; and, of course, any theory that made such a belief impossible must have seemed a denial of God's Word. That view of the matter has been abandoned long ago by Christians. . . . Thirty six years ago it was Darwin against the whole Christian world. Today Darwin lies among Christian England's honored dead in Westminster Abbey, and the man who publicly protests against elevating to the chair of St. Augustine a clergyman who holds the views of Darwin is contemptuously brushed aside as a crank."

* * *

The man referred to, who was treated as a "crank," is the

clergyman mentioned in our issue of January 15, who protested against the enthronement of Dr. Temple as Archbishop of Canterbury and Primate of all England, because as an Evolutionist he was necessarily lacking in all the fundamentals of Christianity. Now hear Brother Moody, the Evangelist. Before a large audience in Carnegie Hall, New York City, he said:

"Nineteen hundred years have rolled away since Christ found no place on earth to lay his head. His gospel is now preached in all parts of the world, but is it not a fact that even now there is not room on earth for the Son of God, and no nation wants him?

"Does America want him? It is a Christian nation. England claims to be the most Christian nation, but if a man stood up in Parliament tomorrow to advocate—could it be possible—that Christ should come in person to rule England, he would be hooted down. France, Germany, Italy and Spain are Christian nations. Is there room for him in either?

"Has not Christianity settled down to be a mere lifeless form? Suppose it were possible to petition Christ to return to earth to rule us. How many of the people of New York would sign the petition? Would business men sign it? They would have to change their methods first. Would stock-brokers sign it? It would smash up their business pretty quick. Would saloon-keepers sign it? They would find their occupation gone should they do so.

"I'll bring the question closer home to you. How about the churches. Do they want him? Pride and form and dignity in the church would have to step down.

"But we can bring the question even closer to us. How many ladies here would vote to have him come? I think but few hands would be raised should the vote be taken this afternoon. Thank God, there are a few who have stepped out of the world who would welcome him!"

THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

As instituted by our Lord, and perpetuated by the apostles and the early church, the Memorial Supper took the place of the Passover Supper—on the fourteenth day of the Jewish first month Nisan. This custom of the earthly church is still preserved in the English, Roman, Greek, Armenian and other so-called "Catholic" churches and by Lutherans. But soon after the death of the apostles, ceremonialism gradually crept in and very greatly altered the original simple memorial services. Then, too, the idea of the Mass was evolved—a *fresh sacrifice of Christ* as the basis for forgiveness of special sins. Masses are not figurative sacrifices, remembrances of the great sacrifice at Calvary, but meant as *new* and *real* sacrifices. The priest is specially commissioned to turn plain ingredients of bread and wine into the *actual body and blood of Christ* in order that the priest may make a *fresh* sacrifice of Christ, with fresh efficacy for the forgiveness of the special sins for which the Mass (sacrifice) is performed. These Masses appear in many respects to merely elaborate the blessing and breaking of the bread and wine at the institution of the Memorial Supper, only that they may be and are celebrated at any hour of any day or night.

It is not surprising that after a thousand years of false teaching and false practice along these lines, Protestants, when awaking and seeking to find the old paths, failed to discern all of the Papal error on this and other subjects. Accordingly, while discarding the Papal Mass (called in Scripture "the abomination that maketh desolate") as *additional sacrifices* for sins, and properly holding and teaching that "by *one* offering he [Christ] hath *perfected for ever* them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14), they overlooked the fact that the added times for what they term "communion" were added for Masses, and that the anniversary of our Lord's death is the only appropriate and the only appointed time for its commemoration.

Accordingly, some celebrate three times a year, some four and some weekly. If the contention, "the oftener the better," be correct, why should they not celebrate it every day? While we cannot say that done in sincerity it is at any time a sinful abomination like the Mass, we may be sure that men of today are not wiser than our Lord and the inspired teachers of the church—the apostles—and that any change from the original institution must result unfavorably. The occasion loses its weight and impressiveness by repetitions disconnected with the fact memorialized. How national memorials would lose their intended significance if repeated three to fifty times a year! The fourth of July, for instance, celebrates a great event, the institution of the United States Government, and it is generally celebrated. But suppose instead it were celebrated weekly or quarterly—would not this deprive the celebration of weight and influence? Assuredly; and so with the memorial of our Lord's death—its anniversary is its only proper or designated occasion for celebration. But once the origin was lost sight of, general carelessness and indifference prevailed, so that although always mentioned in the Scriptures as a "Supper," it is now generally observed at dinner time; and rarely or never as a supper or evening meal, like its pattern.

The expression, "As oft as ye do *this*, ye do show forth the Lord's death, till he come," has been misinterpreted by many to mean,—Do this as often as ye choose. But the emphasis should be put upon *this*—'As oft as ye celebrate *this* annual memorial, instituted by our Lord, ye are showing forth his death, and are to so do until his second coming—*until* the establishment of his kingdom and your glorification therein will fulfill or complete all that is symbolized in the memorial.'

As the people of God "seek for the old paths" (Jer. 6:16), the light of present truth spreads and the number who celebrate the central fact of redemption (the great Sin-offering) on its anniversary increases; and this year probably more than ever before, since the fifth century, will "Do *this*" in remembrance of their Redeemer, on the anniversary of his death.

The "Catholic" churches slightly changed the method of reckoning the anniversary so that they always celebrate a Friday for our Lord's death (Good Friday) and, on the Sunday following, his resurrection (Easter Sunday). The early church, however, followed the Jewish custom of counting, regardless of the days of the week, and so we do. In fact, it is claimed by some that, as the Jews had an abrupt beginning of months every Spring, with the appearance of the new moon at or after the vernal equinox, so they had an abrupt beginning of weeks with the beginning of Passover, which was always counted a Sabbath and the new start of the cycle. However this may be, their Passover week always began with the fifteenth day of Nisan by divine direction.—Exod. 12; Num. 28:16, 17.

We Christians, however, do not celebrate the Passover week. That will find its anti-type by and by, when the glory of the Kingdom shall be enjoyed. We celebrate the fourteenth; a day of which the Jew takes little or no account. It would appear that the fourteenth of Nisan should have been generally observed, but that the Jews seemed to begrudge the time, and generally crowded the supper over onto the fifteenth day, to gain one more day for business. Certain it is that it was proper to both kill and eat the Passover lamb on the fourteenth, for our Lord and the twelve apostles so did, and our Lord was crucified on the *same day;* this being provided for in the Jewish arrangement of time, which began each day at six P. M.—Lev. 23:5, 6.

Reckoning according to the Jewish rule, the fourteenth of Nisan will this year commence Thursday, April 15 at SIX P. M. At 8 P. M a few earnest Christians all over the world, including a little company in Allegheny, will break the memorial bread and taste the memorial fruit of the vine, in grateful remembrance of him who loved us and gave himself for us; and in pledge of our fellowship with him and all who are his, in their sufferings and trials of this present time; and in testimony of our hopes of fellowship by and by in his glory. Reader, will you not join with us at that hour? Whether alone, or as little groups, hundreds of miles asunder, we will surely have a special blessing; and, if we seek it, no doubt we will be welcomed specially *near* to our Heavenly Bridegroom, and be specially strengthened to share his cross, and to withstand the wiles of the devil.

We do not invite a general convocation to Allegheny as formerly, for two special reasons: (1) we are so situated as to be unable to entertain as formerly; and (2) we believe that the cause in general is benefited by having all of each little group meet together on this occasion. Every family together, was the law for the Jews; and it seems appropriate and profitable for us.

As we have heretofore pointed out, anyone of the Lord's people, the choice of the company, may serve the emblems of our Master's broken body and shed blood. The distinctions of "clergy" and "laity" are not of God, but of mistaken men. All who are true "disciples" are invited to take, eat, drink and distribute the emblems. It would surely require a great amount of authority and ordaining to qualify any man to "*create God*" out of bread and wine, as it is claimed the Catholic priests do; but it requires only a fully consecrated, humble believer to do any and every thing commanded by our Lord in respect to this beautiful memorial. Let us, therefore,—all who are his and who see the beauty of his arrangement—obey, and "do this" in remembrance of him. *Un-*

leavened bread is best to use, as an emblem of our Lord's purity, his freedom from sin, which leaven symbolizes. Fruit of the vine may be wine or (preferably, we think) unfermented grape-juice, or the juice from stewed raisins;—"fruit of the vine" is quite a broad term.

MAKE DUE PREPARATION

In the type only the circumcised were allowed to eat of the Passover supper. Circumcision of the heart is the antitype, as the Apostle explains, and signifies a full consecration to the Lord and a separation from the filth of the flesh and sin in general. Let us note, also, that none but those consecrated to be broken with him, and to share his cup of suffering and self-denial, are truly "disciples," and invited to "do *this*."—See Matt. 20:22, 23.

Note, also, that even the "circumcised" were to cleanse their dwellings and put away sin, symbolized by leaven. And faith in the *blood* must be publicly confessed as symbolized by its being sprinkled on the front of their houses. All these things represented Christian life during this Gospel age. The eaters are to be Pilgrims who seek a heavenly country; our "bitter herbs" are the trials and persecutions and revilings and disappointments, incident to our faithfulness to the Lord;—they will only sharpen our appetites for more of our Lamb—Christ our Passover (lamb) slain for us. (Exod. 12:8, 11, 12; 1 Cor. 5:7) And, inasmuch as the law provided that none of the lamb must remain over to be eaten on the morrow, it seems to signify, typically, that the privilege of participation in the Lord's sacrifice is meant by the eating, and that this fellowship or *communion in sufferings* is confined to this Gospel age. This is intimated also by the Apostle.—1 Cor. 10:16, 17.

Let all of the Lord's people examine themselves to see that their hearts are circumcised, separated from the will of the flesh and fully subjected to the will of God in Christ. Let us see to it that we purge out any of the old leaven of malice, envy and strife (1 Cor. 5:8), that the thoughts and intents of our hearts are pure and sweet and clean, and that unavoidable weaknesses are under cover of the precious blood. Although the Lord and the apostles gave no command to fast forty days, as is the custom of the "lenten season" with many, and although we deprecate such formal commands of men, nevertheless, we believe that those who as a preparation voluntarily do some fasting, as well as praying, will be blest according to their faith and love and devotion.

MILLENNIAL DAWN MISREPRESENTED

A Seventh-Day Adventist journal contains the following misrepresentation:—

"If it was expedient that Christ should pass the portals of the tomb to save men from the Adamic death, then it is equally expedient that he should pass the second death tomb, in order to save those who fail in the first opportunity, that they might have the second probation as per Millennial Dawn theology. A second probation for all mankind, and especially the heathen, is a corner-stone in Millennial Dawn theology. We ask, Where is the scripture to show that Christ passed the second-death tomb? If not, can he, or will he, save men from the second death, through a second probation?"

As a Seventh-day Adventist, the writer of the above no doubt acknowledges himself amenable to the command which says, "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor." In the above statement he violates that rule: he bears false witness against MILLENNIAL DAWN and should make amends by reading the book unprejudicedly and then correcting the misrepresentation.

MILLENNIAL DAWN teaches the very contrary of what is here attributed to it. It teaches that there will be neither redemption nor recovery from the Second Death, but on the contrary, that it is the everlasting punishment predicted for all intelligent and willful evil doers.

The merest babe in spiritual things should know that under the divine sentence against Adam, which was shared by all of his race, not one of the human family could have everlasting life;—no, nor even a trial for it, which was what Adam had and lost,—except as the *ransom-price* first secured a release from the original Adamic sentence. This is the plain argument of the great Apostle Paul in Romans 5:12, 17-19.

This *one* opportunity or chance for life, secured by the great sin-offering finished at Calvary, is the only one recognized in MILLENNIAL DAWN. And it is quite sufficient. The Scriptures assure us that it was "for all," for "every man," "a propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world;" and logically this implies that "all," "every man," "the whole world," will be granted an opportunity to profit by it, and, if they will, to come into harmony with God, under the merciful provisions of the New Covenant, and thus gain the gift of God, eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. This *one chance* is to be so complete, so ample, that there will be no reason for another. It will be a *second chance,* individually, to but one person, Adam. It can only be considered a second chance for the entire race by reckoning the entire race as having its first chance while in the loins of Adam, in Eden. That Eden chance or trial resulted in loss to Adam and all in him; none gained life under that chance or trial; and it is from that loss that all have been redeemed by the second Adam who came to seek and to save *that which was lost;* and who under the New Covenant, sealed with his own blood, provides an opportunity for the whole race to return to life and harmony with God—(1) the church as his *bride;* (2) the world as his *children,* to the willing and obedient of whom he shall become "the everlasting father."—Isa 9:6.

This chance, secured by Christ for *all* through his atoning-sacrifice;—this chance which dates from our Lord's resurrection (except as in a typical manner it was previously faintly revealed to the faith of the patriarchs and prophets and in the law to Israel);—this chance, call it first or second as any may please, is the only one we find in the Scriptures, and the only one presented in MILLENNIAL DAWN. But let us see how ample it is, and how few have yet enjoyed this chance of trial for eternal life, secured by the precious blood.

Did the millions who lived outside of the favored nation of Israel for the period of over forty-one centuries before Christ, whom the Apostle describes as being "without God and having no hope,"—did those millions have any share in this chance or trial purchased by the precious blood? Surely not!—See Eph. 2:12.

Did the millions of Jews who lived and died before Christ, and who at the very most had only typical atonements for sin, year by year, which could never take away sin, nor make the worshipers perfect;—did these have a chance or fair trial for eternal life under the New Covenant, which had not in their day gone into effect? Surely not!—See Heb. 9:9; 10:4.

Did the Jews of our Lord's day who rejected him have a full chance? No; for our Lord and the prophets and the apostles testify that "they were blinded" and that "through *ignorance*" they crucified Christ, "as did also your rulers." (Acts 3:17) And we are clearly informed that their national *blinding* was for a purpose, and is to be removed; and that then the New Covenant will go into effect toward them as a people.—See Rom. 11:25-27-33.

How about the heathen of today, and the hundreds of millions of the same class who have died since the true Light, the great Light came, since the Atonement sacrifice was slain at Calvary;—have they had *any chance* of everlasting life, in the remotest sense, never having so much as heard of the New Covenant or of the only name given under heaven or among men, whereby we must be saved? Knowledge is essential to a trial for life everlasting.

How about the other millions who have lived in so-called Christian lands, and have heard church bells ring and seen Bibles, and heard perhaps the preaching of clashing creeds—that we are saved by works and it matters not what is believed;—that we are saved not by works but by faith; that we are saved by both faith and works;—that we are saved by water baptism;—that it should be done by sprinkling;—that it should be by immersion;—that it is for the forgiveness of sins;—that it is not for the forgiveness of sins, but for induction into the elect church;—that there is but one true church, one Lord, one faith, on baptism;—that the Roman Catholic church is that one and all others false;—that the Lutheran is the one, and all others false;—that the Presbyterian is the one, and all others more or less in error;—that the Methodist church is the one, and all others confused. What shall we say of those who in all the din and confusion ("Babylon") do not believe, because they know not what to believe?

Shall we say that such have had a *full, fair chance* for eternal life; and that their failure to believe marks them as fit for the second death? No; we will rather hear the Word of the Lord on the subject. (1) The Apostle's declaration that "the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them that *believe not,* lest the glorious light of the goodness of God should shine into their hearts. (2) We will remember the promise of our Lord's Word, that times of refreshing and restitution shall come at his second advent (Acts 3:19-21), and that then Satan, who now blinds and deceives men, shall

be "bound" and *deceive* the nations no more" for the thousand years of our Redeemer's reign. (3) We will remember the promise through the prophet (Isa. 29:18; 35:5; 42:7, 16) that in that Millennial day all the blind eyes shall be opened, and the light of the truth made seven-fold clearer,—perfectly clear—so that the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth, ocean deep (Isa. 11:9); and then *all* the families of the earth who have not had "ears to hear" during this age shall be blessed with a chance or trial for life under most favorable conditions, according to the blessed terms of the Abrahamic Covenant through the seed of Abraham (Christ Jesus, the head, and the church, the body).—Gal. 3:16, 29; 1 Cor. 6:2.

Let us remember that trial always precedes sentence. Adam was on trial for everlasting life: the result of *his failure* was the penalty, Adamic death, in which we all share. Adam and all of his race were bought back from that sentence by the great sin-offering which God accepted. As a result *another* "chance" or opportunity for trial for everlasting life comes to Adam and to his race. But since the race is no longer "*in Adam*" this trial must be an *individual one.* (See Jer. 31:29-34; Ezek. 18:2-4) As a full, fair opportunity was necessary under the first trial in Eden, so now all must come to a clear knowledge of the conditions of life and death before they can be condemned or justified. This trial will be so complete that there would be no use for another, a third trial, and hence there is no provision for recovery from the Second Death.

"WHY PERSECUTEST THOU ME?"

MARCH 14.—Acts 9:1-12, 17-20.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief."—1 Tim. 1:15.

Saul's transformation, from an enemy of Christ and his church to a friend and zealous servant, is generally termed his conversion. In our opinion, however, the term "conversion" would scarcely be appropriate in such a case. Saul of Tarsus was either a bad man and a hyprocritical Pharisee, a money-lover and self-lover, as were many, or else he was an Israelite indeed, whose aim and object was the service of God, and whose persecution of the early church was prompted by his fidelity to God. We believe that the latter description is the one which fitted his case; it is in harmony with his own testimony on the subject: "I verily thought that I did God service." If then Saul was not only a member of the favored nation of Israel, but a true and loyal member of it, thoroughly consecrated to the Lord and serving him to the best of his knowledge and opportunity, but merely blinded for the time by prejudice and misconception, we can no more think of his case as a conversion that the cases of the other apostles. The Lord chose the original twelve because they were Israelites indeed; and he gave them the needed instruction for his service; and this he did also for Saul, though in a more striking manner. The word *convert* signifies to turn about in an opposite direction. But Saul was already going in the right direction; namely, in a whole hearted service of God, though his efforts were expended upon the wrong thing in the right direction. The Lord merely opened the eyes of his understanding and showed him the better how his efforts should be used. Saul needed no conversion and needed merely to be shown aright; and he proved this by as much fidelity and energy in the Lord's service afterward as he had ignorantly misused previously.

Saul was one of those Israelites who lived amongst the Gentiles, but who occasionally went up to Jerusalem to certain of the feasts. His home was in the city of Tarsus, one of the notable cities of that date—said to have been excelled in scholarship and fine arts by the cities of Alexandria and Athens only. He not only had the advantages of a home in such a city, but his family was one of the influential ones, as is implied in the fact that he was not only a citizen of Tarsus but also a citizen of Rome. In addition to the education of his home city he had received a special course in theology or Jewish Law at Jerusalem, under Gamaliel, one of of the greatest teachers of that time. His early training, therefore, and all of its conditions were favorable to producing in him a breadth and refinement of thought equaled by few; and these conditions combined with his honesty of heart and his zeal for God, though not at first according to knowledge, fitted him to become just what the Lord subsequently made of him; namely, "A chosen vessel unto me to bear my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel."—Acts 9:15.

(1) It would appear that the circumstances connected with the stoning of Stephen only incited Saul to the greater energy in stamping out what he believed to be a very injurious doctrine—a heresy. Our own experience confirms the thought that an earnest, conscientious opponent is more to be respected than a cold, indifferent professed friend, and we are reminded of the Lord's words, "I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." Let us have respect, therefore, for all who are warm-hearted and zealous; remembering that there is more hope of their being pleasing to God, and being accounted worthy to receive the truth, than for the lukewarm.

(2) The Jewish priesthood was granted and exercised considerable power under the arrangements of the Roman government. It had come to exercise very much of the power subsequently used by the pope of Rome. They had power to authorize arrests and imprisonments for the infractions of their religious rules and regulations. Saul, exercising the same respect to law and authority that subsequently marked all of his dealings and teachings as a Christian, did not attempt to take matters into his own hands in the persecution of the Christians, but went about it in the manner recognized as legal—under the sanction and authority of the highest religious tribunal. Let us remember that nearly all persecutions have been sanctioned by some human law, and regulate ourselves under the divine code.

(3-9) The account here given of the opening of the eyes of Saul's understanding is that of Luke, and was doubtless received directly from the Apostle Paul himself—with whom he traveled for a time. Two other accounts are given by the Apostle Paul himself. (See Acts 22:6-11; 26:12-20) The three accounts are in practical agreement, and show only such variations as might reasonably be expected, considering the fact that they were delivered under different conditions; as it was sought to emphasize or elaborate different points. Had the three accounts been exactly alike, word for word, there would have been just ground for supposing a special preparation of the text with this harmony in view. Even the seeming discrepancies of the account, when rightly seen, are additional evidences of the truthfulness of all. The account itself being simple, we need give attention only to those points which apparently conflict. All three accounts say that Saul himself heard the voice, saw the light and fell to the ground. One of the accounts adds that all with him fell to the earth as well. The account in our lesson tells that the men of his company "*stood* speechless, *hearing a voice* but *seeing no man.*" Another account says, "They beheld indeed the light, but they *heard not the voice* of him that spake to me." These accounts can be harmonized in this way: Saul himself was evidently the center of manifestation—"a great light shone round *me.*" His companions doubtless saw something of this light in a general way, but they did not see the source of the light; they did not see the glorious body of our Lord Jesus,—"seeing no man." Saul, however, saw the glorious body of our Lord Jesus, as he himself subsequently testified, "last of all he [Jesus] was seen of me also." Although none but Saul was smitten to the ground, the others who stood speechless and terrorstricken no doubt soon kneeled reverently about their leader. Respecting the voice—Saul and all that were with him heard a sound, "the voice," but only Saul could distinguish the *words*—which were meant for him alone. A similar case is recorded in John 12:28, 29, where it is stated that our Lord Jesus heard a voice from heaven, saying, "I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again." But the people that stood by and heard the voice understood not the words, but said that "it thundered." Saul and all of his company in one sense of the word heard the sound or voice, but in another sense of the word he alone heard the voice. We use this same form of expression in our daily conversation today. If some one speaks to us in a low or indistinct voice, we say that we did not hear—we mean that although we heard the voice we did not understand or comprehend it.

The feelings of Saul, as he heard from the Lord of glory a reproof of his misdirected zeal, can be better imagined than described. Nevertheless, we can but admire the promptness with which he at once laid down the arms of his opposition, and placed himself on the side of the one whose cause he had so recently persecuted. We can imagine him praying, 'Lord teach me! In my blindness and ignorance I have been fighting against thee, the Only Begotten of the Father, the Messiah; while "I verily thought I did God service." Having

made such a great mistake I am thoroughly humbled, I can no longer trust to my own wisdom nor to the wisdom of those in whom I have heretofore confided;—the chief priests, the scribes and Pharisees. Now Lord, I come to thee. Show me how I can undo some of the great wrong I have done ignorantly. Show me, and I will be glad to promptly follow and obey.'

How deep a hold the matter took upon the mind of Saul may be judged from the fact that he neither ate nor drank for three days. He could not think lightly of his own blinded course. Deep contrition is always a good evidence of genuine repentance of wrong. No doubt his thoughts were busy, and, well educated in the law and in the prophets, and familiar with what he had learned concerned the Nazarene and his teachings, we may reasonably suppose that those three days of blindness and fasting were days of prayer and reflection, in which he diligently compared the testimony of the law and the prophets with what he knew of the Nazarene and his teachings. His natural sight had been destroyed, but his mental vision had been opened, and he now saw matters in a new and wonderful light.

(10-17) The name Ananias in a previous lesson was associated with ungodliness and falsehood, but here we find another Ananias of totally a different character—a true servant of the Lord. His hesitation (vs. 13-16) does not seem to have been caused by opposition, nor faithlessness, but rather a reasonable caution. He had heard of Saul and possibly also knew Saul's host to be an enemy of the cause of Christ, and therefore wanted to assure himself that he was not misunderstanding the Lord. The Lord very graciously made the matter clear to him, as he always does to his faithful ones, and Ananias promptly fulfilled his mission. Here again is an illustration of divine methods: The Lord sent upon this important errand one who apparently was a very humble member of the church. He did not send Peter and John and James the apostles from Jerusalem with great pomp and show to receive the penitent enemy of the cross and to make a public triumph, but used an instrument ready and willing that was nearby. This should be a lesson to us that the Lord is both able and willing to use in his service the humble ones who are ready and waiting—

"Emptied, that he might fill them, as forth to his service they go;
Emptied, that so unhindered his life through them might flow."

(18-20) The scales which fell from the eyes of Saul would seem to indicate that a certain portion of the eye had been thoroughly destroyed by the great light; and the healing may be said to have been in a natural way by the removal of the injured cornea. Although informed that he received his sight, we are not informed that his eyes were made whole. Indeed, it seems very evident, from subsequent statements, that to his dying day his eyes never recovered their soundness and his sight was never again normal. It has been surmised, and we think with good reason, that the continued weakness of his eyes constituted what he terms "a thorn in the flesh." Although under the power of the holy spirit he was granted many gifts of the spirit, amongst others the gift of healing, and although he exercised this gift of healing upon many (see Acts 19:11, 12), yet the Lord did not relieve him from his own weakness in this respect. This must have been all the greater trial; it would seem all the more strange that he who could heal others could not heal himself; that he who had divine power for the blessing of others in this way, should not have the divine power for his own blessing. Our Lord's answer to his petition was, "My grace is sufficient for thee, my strength is made perfect in weakness." The noble Apostle exclaims, Therefore most gladly I will suffer, if thereby the grace of God toward me shall be the greater: and thereafter he never requested the removal of this "thorn." Several incidents in his experience confirm this conclusion. (1) Although an educated man, he seldom wrote his own letters; and of the one letter which he did write, although one of the briefest, he remarks (Gal. 6-11), "Ye see how large a letter I have written unto you with *my own hand.*" The Greek would even give the thought that these words apologize for the use of very large characters in the writing—such as a semi-blind person would use; (2) the Apostle comes down to us in history as "the bleared-eye Jew;" (3) when standing before the tribunal of the chief captain he declares that he did not know Ananias as the high priest; whereas, if his eyesight had been good, he could not have well helped knowing him, on account of his gorgeous apparel (Acts 23:5); (4) in writing to the Galatians he tells them (4:15) that, when he first met them, their love and sympathy for him were such that they would willingly have plucked out their own eyes for him—an expression which would be meaningless, unless his eyes were defective.

After a few days to gain strength from his fasting and the nervous excitement incidental to his experiences, days of communion with those whom he had come to persecute, and whom now in his renewed condition of mind he recognized and fellowshiped as dear brethren, he promptly began to preach Christ as the Son of God—publicly using the opportunities afforded in the Jewish Synagogues.

Those who think of the Apostle Paul's experiences as on a par with the conversion of sinners greatly err. Such conduct as is here related is not the conduct of sinners, enemies of God. The account of the Apostle's enlightenment in the gospel is the account of a most noble character which commands the respect of every class in every time. And we are inclined to regard the Apostle Paul as in some sense of the word a figure, or likeness, or type of his race—Israel—and the opening of their eyes now shortly due to take place. Amongst the Jews are many who seem to be Israelites indeed, merely blinded, as the prophet and the apostle have described. (Rom. 11:7-12) That nation whose blinding took place in the fifth (1,000 year) day, and which has been blinded throughout the sixth (1,000-year day), is to have its eyes opened on the third day, which will be the seventh (1,000 year) day—the Millennial Day. Israel also has been without food or drink of a spiritual kind during all this time. Israel also is to be a chosen vessel in the Lord's hand as connected with the earthly agencies in bearing the message which shall bless the Gentiles and all the families of the earth. We are near to the time for the opening of Israel's eyes. When the time shall have fully come, the Lord will send some Ananias whose touch and blessing under divine favor shall bring sight. The name Ananias signifies, "Jah is gracious."

CHRISTIAN LIBERTY AND SELF-RESTRAINT

MARCH 21.—1 Cor. 9:19-27.

"Every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things."—1 Cor. 9:25.

Doubtless it was in great measure because of his breadth of learning, as well as the result of his deep consecration, and hence his nearness to the Lord and fellowship in the divine plan, that the Apostle Paul was enabled to grasp the conditions of the New Covenant and the Gospel dispensation more quickly than did the other apostles. Although the Apostle Peter took as broad a view as others of the original twelve and although in addition the Lord gave him the vision to indicate that the Gentiles were no longer to be considered unclean by the Jews, and sent him direct to preach the Gospel to Cornelius, the first Gentile convert, and although he witnessed the gifts of the holy spirit communicated to him, yet the Apostle Paul seems to have grasped the whole situation much more comprehensively than did even Peter; so that when Peter was confused on this subject, and stumbling, Paul was both able and willing to help him to clearer views. (Gal. 2:14) It was Paul who first saw "that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit;" and that amongst those who have come under the new order of things there is no distinction of Jews and Gentiles, male and female, bond or free, because they are all *one* in Christ Jesus. It was Paul who recognized the fact that those who had accepted Christ were entirely free from the law of Moses; that to them Moses was dead and they were married to another, even Christ, and were under his law;—the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus which made Israelites free from the law of sin and death.—Rom. 7:4, 6.

(19-23) But though realizing his liberties in Christ, his freedom from all bondage, as of holy days, new moons, sabbaths, meats, etc. (Col. 2:16; Rom. 14:5), the Apostle was not anxious to use his liberty except as between the Lord and himself, and such of the brethren as could appreciate the matter. Those who were weak and bounden by law and ceremonies and human traditions received from the elders, found in the Apostle one who did not seek to triumph over them by boasting of his liberty and their bondage. On the contrary if they were in bondage to the Law he waived for the time his own liberties that he might thereby through sympathy and patience help them to the same liberty which he enjoyed at heart. And so we find him advising and urging others. He said:

'You find yourselves free from the law and those restraints which are upon your brethren, the Jews, you now say they are no longer bondages to you. You are thus greatly relieved:

nevertheless, use not your liberties for an occasion of the flesh. You may know that an idol is nothing, and that meat offered to an idol (the custom amongst Gentiles) is not thereby injured, and you may feel perfectly free to eat that meat; but if a brother is with you who does not yet realize this freedom and see matters from this loftier standpoint, do not put a barrier between your heart and his by using your liberties, but rather for his sake avoid the use of that liberty that you may have the greater influence with him and bring him to appreciate the still greater liberties which are ours through Christ.

'The blessings of the kingdom of God are not merely these liberties to eat what we please without condemnation, and to be without restraint from fast days, new moons and sabbaths! No, no; the liberties which we have as the incipient kingdom of God are far better than these, though they include these. The more important things are the freedom from sin, the communion and fellowship with the Lord, and the prospect of a glorious inheritance in the future. Righteousness, peace, joy in the holy spirit, these are the fruits of our new relationship to Christ which are to be specially enjoyed, and in comparison to which our liberty to eat and not to eat what we please and to observe such holy days as we may please are insignificant.'—Rom. 14:17-20.

This is the Apostle's meaning in this lesson. He did not mean that he dissembled or deceived or pretended to be a Jew, etc., but that having and realizing his liberties, he did not always choose to exercise his liberties in Christ if he found better opportunities for usefulness by simply neglecting to claim or use liberty. Principles may never be abandoned for any consideration; but liberties and personal rights may be ignored in the interest of others, frequently and to divine pleasing; the Apostle was ready to go any length in defense of principle, and could not be budged an inch (Gal. 2:5, 11); but in the sacrifice of his earthly rights and privileges and liberties for the sake of Christ and his church, the Apostle evidently came next to our Lord Jesus, and is a noble example to all the church, as shown in this lesson.

An illustration of such a proper ignoring of liberties without abandonment of principle is found in connection with Sunday observance. To our understanding Sunday, the first day of the week, is in no sense of the word the Sabbath day that was commanded to the Jews,—which was the seventh day. The Christian is not commanded by the Bible to keep any particular day, in any particular manner different from other days; but by his covenant with God he is to keep *every day holy unto the Lord.* He has no more right to do wrong on one day than on another. His *rest* in Christ under the New Covenant is not the physical rest of the Jew under the Law Covenant. It is higher: it is a *rest of faith* that brings joy and refreshment; not only physical, but mental and spiritual.

This rest is not merely for one day in the week; the true Christian is to rest in Christ, and have joy and peace in believing every day. Instead, therefore, of having a seventh day rest in each week the Christian has seven days of rest in each week—a rest and a peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

Not by divine appointment but of their own volition the early church began to keep as a day of special gathering together the first day of the week, as a memorial of our Lord's resurrection from the dead, and the new life and new joy which began with that day. For a time they continued to observe also the seventh day, until they learned through the apostles' instructions that they were dead to the Jewish law and had become new creatures in Christ under the law of the spirit of life,—which has but one commandment and that an all comprehensive one—Love.

The majority of Christians today seem to have drifted away in part from the liberties and appreciations of the New Covenant and to be attempting to mix the Jewish covenant with the Christian covenant, the Jewish law of ten commandments with the Christian law of one commandment—love. Accordingly Sunday, the first day of the week, is by many regarded as the Sabbath day of the Jews; and they mentally attach to it all the requirements of the Jewish law, and yet they continually feel a heart-condemnation in respect to it, as did the Jews, because they rarely or never live up to the requirements of the Law for that day. The law demanded that no work of any kind should be done by parents, children, servants or cattle; and as exemplifying the rigor of that law there is a record in the Scriptures that a man was stoned to death because he gathered sticks for a fire on the Sabbath day. By reason of this false conception that the first day is the Sabbath day or that somehow or other (they know not how or when or where) the authorities and ordinances respecting the Jewish Sabbath day were transferred to Sunday, the first day, many are continually under condemnation to conscience—a consciousness of sin.—Gal. 4:10, 11:5:4; Col. 2:16, 17.

With some of those who learn the truth on this subject there is a combative disposition which leads them to wish to display their *liberties* by doing on the first day of the week that which their fellow Christians regard as improper—sinful. Such a combative spirit is a sign that the spirit of Christ is not dwelling richly within—that more knowledge has reached the individual than he has been able to wisely use. It indicates that such have need to grow in grace, in love, proportionately as they grow in knowledge.

The Apostle's declaration, in the lesson before us, is an illustration of the right spirit concerning every such question. If our neighbors meet in worship on the first day of the week, because they believe it to be the command of God, our liberty can be just as fully exercised meeting on the same day; not from a sense of obligation, not under law, but in the full enjoyment of the liberty wherewith Christ makes free. Indeed, we can enjoy the day very much more when we realize it as a liberty and privilege rather than as a duty and command. Yet there are trifling liberties which we should yield; for instance, our neighbor, thinking that he is under the Jewish law, might consider the driving of a tack to be a violation of the day of rest. We who know that we are not under the law but under grace, realize that no sin would be committed in driving a tack; but nevertheless we can well and properly set aside our liberties in that matter and conform and cooperate in the maintenance of the peace and quiet of the day. Indeed, we realize that the mistake of our friends is in many respects a blessing and a mercy to us. For if many appreciated the matter as we do, as a liberty and privilege and not as a law of God, quite probably a majority would pay no respect whatever to the day, and very soon it might be as other days. We are very glad, therefore, that a day for rest and quiet and study and meditation on holy things is set aside by the laws of the land in which we live. But even if we saw no reason whatever for observing the day, the fact of its legal secular appointment is a sufficient ground for abstinence from earthly labors. But on the contrary we see the wisdom of having a day for special fellowship in spiritual things and the day adopted by early Christians is eminently proper. The opening day of a new week symbolizes our *new* rest, *new* hopes and *new* life—all of which spring from the resurrection of our Lord.

We advise those who are seeking to walk in the "narrow way" to follow the Apostle's counsel and example closely, and while realizing themselves free in Christ to make themselves servants unto all—"doing good unto all men as we have opportunity, especially to the household of faith."

The Apostle was not moved to this abrogation of his own liberties from any selfish motives, but by his love of the gospel and his desire to supply to others its blessed healing balm, which had come to his own spirit. Wherever the spirit of Christ is, this spirit is received; and if developed it will manifest itself sooner or later by this disposition of self-negation in the interest of other—especially in spiritual interest and affairs.

(24-27) The Apostle would have us see that while we are granted liberties in Christ, nevertheless the essence of Christian teaching is to deny ourselves the use of those very liberties. As slaves of sin we were set free in order that we might become the *voluntary* bond-servants of righteousness—serving with self-sacrifice "even unto death." The Jews as a house of servants under Moses, were bound as servants by rigorous laws, the meaning and object of which were not explained to them. But the house of sons, of which Christ is the Head, is left free from any law, except the one—to love God with every power of being and our neighbor as ourself. But this very liberty, which is granted to us on the one hand, is the greater trial on the other hand. It leaves with us each the responsibility of proving our love to God and to his cause and to his people, and our sympathy for the world, by the extent to which we are willing to abandon our liberties for these—as their servants.

The Apostle illustrates this by the Olympic games of his day, prominent amongst which was foot-racing. Racers were set free to run, so we as Christians are set free from the law that we may run our race and win the great prize; but he that complies with certain recognized conditions, and "so runs," shall be crowned an overcomer.

Consecrated Christians have entered the lists, to run the great race for the prize of our high calling in Christ Jesus—the prize of joint-heirship with him in the kingdom of glory, to be established at his second coming. We start on our race course not aimlessly, not hopelessly, not simply for the sake of denying ourselves, not to do penance for sins, nor simply for the sake of developing character; but the Lord has graciously arranged the matter so that we will have a grand and

noble incentive to self-denial. The prize at the end of the race is his "Well done, good and faithful servant;" and to the faithful little flock "the crown of life" and the glory of the kingdom. Therefore we are not running uncertainly, doubtfully, not knowing what the prize will be, for we are instructed by the Lord's own words.

The Apostle points out in this connection that if we hope to be overcomers and approved of the Lord we must be moderate, temperate, self-denying in all things. This he emphasizes in verse twenty-seven. It is not only necessary that our whole being should be consecrated to the Lord at the beginning of the race, but it continues necessary all along the way, that it shall be continually subject to the new mind, the mind of Christ, which is to dwell in us richly and abound. Otherwise, if we allow the old, fallen nature to rise up and hinder the new mind, the mind of Christ in us—if we permit the will of the flesh thus to come into control again, we may count the race as ignominiously terminated and ourselves as "castaways;" because the mind of the flesh leads to death, but the mind of the new spirit of life in Christ, by which we are begotten through the Word of truth, leads to life everlasting, and through faithfulness to eternal glory.

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THE UNCONDITIONAL OATH-BOUND COVENANT*

AND THE "OLD" AND "NEW" COVENANTS ADDED THERETO

"Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto."—Gal. 3:15.

A clear appreciation of the divine covenants is important and valuable to the Christian. In the knowledge of these he possesses the key to the understanding of the entire plan of God.

THE NECESSITY FOR A COVENANT

It was because of man's fall into sin, and its accompanying degradation, mental, moral and physical, which followed ejectment from Eden, and especially because of the sentence of death pronounced against him, that he had need of the divine arrangements for his recovery and blessing provided in these covenants—original and added. The failure of Adam had cut off himself and his race from divine favor and placed them under divine sentence; and nothing that man could do would restore divine favor. The initiative toward reconciliation must come from God if at all; and the covenants were his statements of his proposition for a reconciliation, and how and with whom and by whom it should be accomplished. God did not make his plan because of Abraham; but merely made known his predetermined purpose to faithful Abraham; and chose his family as the one through which Messiah would be sent, for the accomplishment of that plan. The plan itself was, we are told, predetermined—from the foundation of the world. Abraham's faithfulness merely brought him and his family into relationship to that plan of the ages.

To enforce the sentence of death, Adam was at once driven out from Eden and its grove of life-giving trees into the wilderness of earth, infested with thorns and briers, "accursed" or unfit for the sustenance of life. There he was permitted to prolong his days as best he could, until the sentence which was upon him should accomplish his destruction—dust to dust.

From the moment of his rejection and sentence, degeneration set in; affecting all his posterity. The unfavorable conditions of the soil and climate have since had their effect upon the physical man, and incidentally upon his mental and moral status; for since an imperfect body cannot sustain a perfect mind, the elements of decay quickly fastened themselves on the mental powers; and mental and moral impairment are the result. The undesirable conditions of the new surroundings, so different from what had previously been experienced, gradually developed selfishness as the leading characteristic of his being. Thus did the sentence, "Dying thou shalt die," surely go into effect along all the lines of his organism.

With all the race since, the tendency has been downward; so that in the course of six thousand years man's physical powers have become so impaired that instead of living nine hundred and thirty years, as did Adam, the average of life is now only about thirty-five years, despite all the efforts of medical science to lengthen the span of life. And although improved nursing and medical skill and surgery have lately increased the average of life about five years (from thirty to thirty-five years), yet this longer survival of the physically impaired evidently means a general weakening of the race as a whole. Surely all can see, and should admit, that everlasting life is abundantly proved to be beyond the reach of Adam's race. Nothing that any of the condemned can do can *perfect* himself or his fellows. Hence, as death reigned from Adam to Moses, and from Moses till now, so it must continue to reign over the race unless God shall interpose for the relief of his condemned creatures, and in some manner provide a release from the *death sentence*.

Many are inclined to consider the term "sin" applicable only to murder, theft, and such like heinous crimes; and not having been guilty of these, they consider themselves good, exemplary people. They fail to see that from God's standpoint and standard of righteousness anything short of *perfection* is imperfection, wrong, out of harmony with his original creation, "sinful." "All unrighteousness [imperfection] is sin," and the "wages [result and penalty] of sin is death."

It is written, "All his [God's] work is perfect." It was so in Adam's case and with the angels. Whatever imperfection—mental, physical or moral—there may be, is therefore, directly or indirectly, the result of disobedience to divine arrangement and command. Imperfection, therefore, is an evidence of disobedience to God and the laws which he ordained for the well-being of his creatures;—an evidence that sin lieth at the door.

But although God "could by no means *clear* the guilty," he nevertheless sympathized with his fallen creatures, and made provision for their uplifting,—from degradation back to the plane of perfection, where he can fellowship and bless them as at first. In order to accomplish this gracious plan. God "gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him [obediently] should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Thus the man Christ Jesus became the mediator between God and man.

In his dealings with mankind God is manifesting to all his creatures, angels as well as men, the various attributes of his character—justice, wisdom, love and power. In his condemnation of Adam's sin, God brought forcibly to the notice of all the attribute of justice, the basic principle of his character; as it is written, "Justice and judgment are the *foundation* of his throne." (Psa. 89:15; 97:2) This feature of his character (*viz.*, justice) God continued to make prominently manifest for more than four thousand years; until Christ came and suffered and died, the just for the unjust, by which act the beautiful, divine quality, love, was made manifest; as it is written, "In this was *manifested the love of God* toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:9, 10) "God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly."—Rom. 5:8.

Until then the world knew nothing of God's love, practically. There it was demonstrated. He had indeed made some gracious promises to the seed of Abraham, but as yet they were unfulfilled, while all others of mankind were without God and without hope.—Eph. 2:12.

THE UNCONDITIONAL OATHBOUND COVENANT

It was in view of his desire and intention to bless the world of sinners, Adam's race, that God, as indicating that intention and the lines or conditions to be followed, made the great Abrahamic Covenant, and later its two dependents —(1) The Law Covenant, (2) The New Covenant. The original covenant or promise includes all that its added or dependent covenants include in the way of blessing; while the latter constitute but proper and reasonable limitations and regulations, by which the blessings promised may be made *everlasting* blessings to all the worthy.

Though little is said of Abraham prior to God's making the covenant with him, we may suppose that he was a man of honesty of heart, of good intentions, and one who had already manifested a strong faith in God. When Abraham was living in the land of the Chaldeans, God called him out from his relatives and friends, and directed him to go into the land of Canaan, where he would make of him a great nation; promising, further, that in his seed all the families of the earth

* [See June 15, 1919, issue, critical examination Covenant articles.]

should ultimately be blessed. This covenant was a definite declaration of God's benevolent intentions toward humanity in general, and that it had pleased him to select Abraham's posterity as the line through which to communicate the great and much needed blessing. The only condition to the covenant was obedience in going a stranger into a strange land. Abraham's obedience manifested his faith; and his continuance in Canaan marked the continuance of his faith (see Heb. 11:15); and this faithful obedience was the only condition imposed or connected with this great covenant. If Abraham would exercise obedient faith, God would do all therein promised *through his seed.* If Abraham had failed in faith and obedience, the same good things would in due time fulfil the divine purpose, but through another man's seed.

Abraham no doubt wondered at times how God intended to fulfil his covenant, seeing that the Canaanites continued to live in the land, while he was never more than a sojourner in it. God's promise concerning his seed seemed also to fail; and after many years, when Isaac was born, he proved to be only a type or foreshadow of the true "Seed" through whom the promise of great prominence and world-wide influence and blessing would be fulfilled.

Four hundred and thirty years after making this covenant with Abraham, God manifested another feature of his plan. When bringing Abraham's posterity out of Egyptian slavery to establish them in the promised land of Canaan, he brought them to Mount Sinai, and there entered into an additional covenant with them, known as,—

THE LAW COVENANT, ADDED

God wrote his law in ten commandments upon two tables of stone, as representing his requirements, and appointed Moses the mediator between himself and the people of Israel, to ratify the covenant and in his name to promise the people escape from death and from every evil and blight, upon condition of their living up to the requirements of that law; as it is written, "The man that doeth them shall live in them."—Gal. 3:12; Lev. 18:5; 26:3-11, 14-44.

Israel, hopeful that the long deferred blessing of the original promise was now to be fulfilled, readily assented to the terms of this Law Covenant *addition,* and said, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do" (Ex. 19:8); and no doubt they honestly intended full obedience and considered it possible. Moses, fulfilling his part, *ratified* the covenant on behalf of God and the people, by sprinkling the blood of the sacrifice on the people and on the tables of the law, saying, This is the blood of the covenant which God hath enjoined unto you,—or by which you and God are joined in covenant.

This covenant was unlike the original Abrahamic Covenant, which required no mediator, because it was unconditional on Abraham's part except as to obedient faith. When Abraham entered Canaan, the terms on his part were complete, and God at once announced the Covenant and confirmed it with his own oath, thus assuring Abraham, and all who are similarly full of faith in God, that all of its provisions will surely be fulfilled regardless of human co-operation. Abraham's seed *shall bless* all the families of the earth.

The Law Covenant, whatever its object, the Apostle assures us, could not (and hence it did not) make the original or Abrahamic Covenant useless, nor could it in any manner or degree impair its gracious promise; for it was complete in itself, and God had confirmed it most absolutely.—Gal. 3:8, 17.

What, then, could be God's object in making the Law Covenant with Israel, and (so far as *they* were concerned) *adding it to* the Abrahamic Covenant? The Apostle answers our query, saying, "It [the Law Covenant] was added because of transgression [sin], till the promised seed should come." (Gal. 3:19) The promised seed of Abraham, which God had in mind when he made the covenant with Abraham, was Christ our Lord (and incidentally the church which is his body, his *bride,* whose blemishes he covers). And by giving Israel the Law Covenant God purposed—(1) to show them their own sinfulness and unworthiness to be the "seed" which could and should bless all mankind. (2) The Law addition to the Abrahamic Covenant insured that the "promised seed" would be a perfect man, able to keep all the requirements of the Law Covenant perfectly, as our Lord Jesus alone did or could do. (3) If the Israelites learned the lesson of their own inability to fulfil the requirements of the Law Covenant, it would prepare them to expect Messiah's birth out of the usual order, to insure his freedom from Adamic condemnation and weakness.

Thus the Abrahamic Covenant and its confirmations assured that the "seed" *must* be of Abraham's descendants, while the Law addition just as surely proved that he would be "holy, harmless, undefiled and *separate* from sinners."

It would appear that Israel never fully appreciated the requirements of their Law Covenant, which no one but a perfect man could fulfil; for a very large class, Pharisees and others, claimed that they kept it inviolate—"trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others" (Luke 18:9), who made no such claim. But our Lord's definition of the Law showed that anger with a brother may contain the spirit of murder and be a violation of the command, "Thou shalt not kill;" and that the command, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," may be broken in the secret thought of the heart. And, summing up the whole Law, as meaning supreme love for God (more than for self) in every word, thought and act, and love for our neighbor as for one's self, his teachings brought conviction to all honest Jews who heard him, that none of them ever had kept or ever could hope to keep the conditions of that Law Covenant perfectly. Such saw that they could no longer hope for eternal life through their Covenant, and said, like Peter, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Such honest Jews realized what the Apostle Paul so graphically describes in Romans 7, that their Law Covenant was not able to deliver them from death because of their inherited imperfections, the "dead body," sin-impaired, which hindered the obedience they would gladly have rendered to God's just, wise and good law. But by these the Gospel of Christ was then seen to be a God-send; and the Jew whose heart was in proper condition, catching sight of the *mercy* of God offered in Christ, exclaimed, as represented by the Apostle—"I thank God [for deliverance and life] through Jesus Christ our Lord; for what the Law [Covenant] could not do [for us Jews], in that it was powerless because of [our fallen] flesh, God accomplished [in another way; *viz.,*] by sending his own Son in the likeness of the flesh condemned for sin and as a sin-offering for sin-condemned flesh; that [under the mercy of the New Covenant] the righteousness of the divine law might be reckoned as fulfilled in us, who [however imperfectly], walk *not after* the flesh, but *after* the spirit [of the divine law.]—Rom. 7:25; 8:3, 4.

Our Lord Jesus could and did fulfil the demands of the Law Covenant: he proved his supreme love for the Father by his obedience to the divine arrangement "unto death, even the death of the cross." Thus he demonstrated that he was the Seed of promise, and became *sole heir* to all of the provisions of the Abrahamic Covenant, promised to Abraham's seed. Hence in him only shall all the families of earth be blessed.

Thus our Lord Jesus, having fulfilled the conditions of the added Law Covenant (thus proving himself the "Seed," and heir of the Abrahamic Covenant), made an end to the Law Covenant to every Jew who believed, nailing it to his cross (Rom. 10:4; Col. 2:14), and was ready to begin the work of blessing.

THE NEW COVENANT, ADDED

The Law Covenant did indicate the perfect one, the "Seed," the true heir; but it was God's purpose, additionally, to select "brethren" of Christ to be his "joint-heirs" in carrying out the original, the Abrahamic Covenant of general blessings to the world; and, as we have just seen, the Law Covenant could avail nothing in this selection—its requirements being too severe for any except perfect beings, and our race being all imperfect.

On the other hand, to *bless* the world with a knowledge of God and the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of his wisdom and love and power, and yet to have made *no provision* for the race, for justification to life everlasting, would have been but a *temporary* blessing; for after seeing and tasting they would have been obliged to *die* under their original just sentence.

It was expedient, therefore, and as an addition to the blessing of the Abrahamic Covenant, that divine mercy *added* the New Covenant, that through it the original blessings may become *everlasting*—to all who conform to the terms of the New Covenant. The "New" Covenant addition is to indicate the way by which convicted sinners may return to divine favor, obtaining mercy and finding grace to help in the merit of its Mediator, Christ—in whom their holy efforts and intentions can be accepted as perfect, although actually imperfect. The "Law" addition was to the Jew only; the "New" addition is for "all the families of the earth;" for whoever of Adam's race may choose to accept its provisions.

Since all men are sinners and consequently incompetent to make a covenant of full obedience to all the requirements of the perfect, divine law (as was proved to be the case with Israel), the New Covenant must needs have a mediator, as did the Law Covenant. Moreover, it required a better, more capable mediator than Moses, or else it could be no more efficacious to mankind in general than was the Law Covenant to Israel.

The work or office of Moses as a mediator was to effect reconciliation (harmony) between God and Israel—the two

parties to the Covenant, both of whom desired reconciliation. Similarly, the work of our Lord Jesus, as the mediator of the New Covenant, is to bring into harmony with God so many of Adam's race as may wish peace with God upon his terms; *viz.*, faith and obedience to righteousness.

Question:—What did our Lord Jesus do as a mediator for all mankind that Moses could not do, and did not do, for Israel? This: (1) he, being holy, harmless and *separate* from sinners, fulfilled the requirements of the Law in his own person; and (2) he gave himself ("the man Christ Jesus" and the seed of an unborn human race in his loins) as a ransom-price or corresponding purchase-price for Adam and his race (which was an unborn race in Adam's loins at the time of his trial and failure and death-sentence). Because this was done in obedience to the divine will and plan, our Lord Jesus was perfected as a "new creature" partaker of the divine nature, in his resurrection from death, and is now highly exalted "far above" men, angels, principalities and powers, in heavenly glory;—sharer of the heavenly Father's throne.

By means of his sacrifice as "the man Christ Jesus," a ransom-price *for* the first man, Adam, he, as we have just seen, redeemed (purchased) Adam's race from the divine sentence—death, *extinction.* Not that the race was *set free* by his sacrifice, but that the divine law (justice) having been met, the race is delivered over to him who "bought" it with his own precious blood, that he may release from death and bring to everlasting life the *willing* and obedient.—John 3:36.

Thus, by purchase, by the full satisfaction of the claims of justice against Adam, the new Mediator has a great advantage over Moses, and is thus a "better mediator," competent to do all that can be done to reconcile, or make at-one, God and his sinful, fallen creatures. As the sentence of death brought exclusion from the grove of life-sustaining trees in Eden (Gen. 3:22-24), and death as the result, so now by reason of having paid man's ransom-price, the great Mediator is permitted to feed his people with "the bread of life which came down from heaven," and thus to revivify them.

But the Mediator can do nothing for the redeemed except in harmony with the spirit of the divine law, nor does he otherwise desire. Hence the New Covenant, sealed and ratified by the Mediator's blood, and under which alone the blessings are obtainable, demands:—

(1) *Faith* in God, acknowledgement and repentance of all sins, a full recognition of the Mediator, and of the fact that this, the only covenant of *grace*, mercy, peace, was sealed and ratified by "the precious blood of Christ"—his sacrificial death.

(2) It requires also *obedience and reformation* from sin to the extent of the sinner's ability, and a full desire of heart and effort of life to live righteously, soberly and godly—a desire to know and to do the heavenly Father's will, under the guidance and help of the Mediator.—James 1:25.

WHO WILL BENEFIT BY THE NEW COVENANT?

Thus the rights, privileges and blessings of the New Covenant, while open to all, as required by the original Covenant, will be of *everlasting* benefit only to the *willing and obedient*—such as desire and seek God and his [standard of] righteousness; and they alone will gain everlasting life under this Covenant, either in this or in the coming age.

Since the trial for everlasting life under the New Covenant has as its primary qualification *faith*, it is evident that only a very small proportion of the world's inhabitants have yet benefited by it. As the Apostle says,—"How shall they believe on him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" (Rom. 10:14) But any doubt that the blessings of this New Covenant are to be extended ultimately to every member of Adam's race, by bringing each one to this necessary knowledge, is not only set at rest by the Apostle Paul's declaration that it is the will of God that *all* shall *come to the knowledge of the truth*, and that it shall be testified to all "*in due time*" (1 Tim. 2:4-6), but it is guaranteed by the oath by which God attested the original covenant with Abraham, saying, "In thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed."—Gal. 3:16, 29.

The whole subject becomes transparent when we see that the *Abrahamic Covenant* (which needed no mediator because it was God's *unconditional* promise, confirmed by his oath) is the full, broad statement of the divine plan, and that as the Law Covenant was *added* (to illustrate the inability of sinners to help themselves and) to manifest Christ Jesus as the Seed of Promise, so the New Covenant is *added* (to the Abrahamic Covenant) also,—not to hinder the "*blessing*" of every creature, but to make that "blessing" of knowledge and the Millennial kingdom opportunities more effective,—even unto everlasting life—to those approved under it.

THE FULFILMENT OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT

From this standpoint we can see that the only steps thus far taken in the fulfilment of the original and comprehensive statement of the divine plan, the "Covenant with Abraham" (which, as the Apostle declares, was an advance declaration of the whole *Gospel*—the good tidings in an epitomized form—Gal. 3:8), are:—

(1) The manifestation of God's only begotten Son as "*the man* Christ Jesus," and his approval as perfect under the Law.

(2) By the same act of obedience and faithfulness he "bought" Adam and his race; and by meeting the terms of their sentence, according to the divine plan, he has made it possible for God to be *just* and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus; and made it possible for himself, as the divinely proposed and foreordained "Seed of Abraham," to make the blessing upon the willing and obedient an *everlasting* blessing.

(3) According to the original divine plan a *multitudinous* "seed" was contemplated from the beginning (Gal. 3:29; Eph. 1:4)—the fullness, power and authority of which should always reside in Christ Jesus, our Lord and Redeemer. The next step in the divine plan has been the *selection* from among men of this special class,—called the church of Christ—of which Jesus is the Lord and Head (Eph. 1:22, 23); called the bride, the Lamb's wife and joint-heir (Rev. 19:7); called also "members of his body," controlled by him as the Head (1 Cor. 12:27); called also his "brethren" (Heb. 2:11); called also the "royal priesthood," under him as the High Priest or Chief Priest, and sharers of his glory, honor and immortality, and joint-heirs in his kingdom and in his inheritance in the Abrahamic Covenant as the "seed" to whom belongs the promise.—See Rev. 20:4; Gal. 3:29.

This selection of the church is along lines of severe testing; for God has *predestinated* that all who will constitute members of the multitudinous seed must "be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among *many brethren.*" (Rom. 8:27) And since none are "called" to this high honor except the "justified," and none justified except through faith, under the terms of the New Covenant, it follows that, since the vast majority thus far are blinded by the prince of this world so that they cannot believe (2 Cor. 4:4), and since even after believing and being called many fail to make their "calling and election *sure;*" therefore this elect church, when completed and perfected and glorified at the end of the "narrow way" which few find (Matt. 7:14), will be a "little flock,"—containing "not many great," rich or wise, according to the estimate of this world.—1 Cor. 1:26-28; Jas. 2:5.

(4) When the elect number has been selected, and been glorified with their Head, Christ Jesus, as associates and joint-heirs in his Millennial kingdom—then, and not till then, will the "seed of Abraham," contemplated in the divine Covenant and oath to Abraham, have fully come. And then, immediately, the way being all prepared, the blessing of all mankind (eventually "all that are in the graves") shall begin. All shall be blessed with the knowledge and opportunity of the gracious provisions of the New Covenant, and all who heartily accept its provisions shall have life and joy everlasting.

(5) Incidentally, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the holy prophets, faithful before the New Covenant, will receive a special blessing and be associated as earthly or human representatives of the spiritual kingdom of God in blessing the world; but their part and service will be under the direction of the church, God having provided some *better thing for* US, that they without US should not be made perfect.—Heb. 11:40; Luke 16:16.

(6) Incidentally, also, another class, "a great multitude whose number *no man knows*" (Rev. 7:9, 13-15) will be developed; but not being "overcomers," having failed to "make their calling and election *sure*"—although they will be privileged to "*serve*"—will constitute no part of the elect "seed" in whom will reside the blessing-power of royalty and priesthood.

(7) Incidentally, also, the preaching of the Gospel in connection with the "calling" of the "Seed" has had a civilizing influence throughout the world. It has scattered some of the "gross darkness" by which Satan and sin have enshrouded the world of mankind. But still it is dark;—still "gross darkness covers the people;" still the god of this world blinds the minds of them that believe not; still "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together," waiting for the glorious Millennial morning which shall accompany the shining forth of the seed of Abraham, the sons of God in glory, as the "Sun of Righteousness "with *healing [restitution] in his beams.*—Isa. 60:2; Rom. 8:22, 19; Mal. 4:2; Acts 3:19-21.

"OUR SUFFICIENCY IS OF GOD"

2 COR. 3:5.

"Wherefore, . . . work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure."—Phil. 2:12, 13.

The thoughtful reader of the Scriptures must often be impressed with that intensity of zeal and earnest striving urged upon all the followers of Christ who would so run as to obtain the prize of our high calling which is of God in Christ Jesus. For instance, we read:—

"*Strive* to enter in at the strait gate; for many I say unto you will seek to enter in, and shall not be able, when once the Master of the house is risen up and has shut to the door;" "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it;" "Whosoever he be of you that *forsaketh not all that he hath*, he cannot be my disciple;" "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus;" "Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life;" "Watch unto prayer;" and, then, "Be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that shall be brought unto you at the appearing of Jesus Christ." And Peter again adds, "Beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot and blameless." . . . "Seeing that all these [present] things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."—Luke 13:24; Matt. 7:13, 14; Luke 14:33; Heb. 12:1; 1 Tim. 6:12; 1 Pet. 4:7; 1:13; 2 Pet. 3:14, 11.

How different all this appears from that easy-going Christianity which seems but a very little removed from the spirit of the world, and which is so common that the zeal which strives and runs and fights and watches with sober vigilance that the sacrifice of self is kept upon the altar is generally regarded as extreme, peculiar, fanatical and foolish. Nevertheless, in the face of this latent opposition, as well as of all open opposition, the course of the overcomer is right onward. It is a course of self-denial and cross-bearing, even unto the end. It is a dying daily to the spirit, hopes, aims and ambitions of the world which control other men and women, so that in the end of our course we may be of that happy "little flock" of "overcomers" of whom it is written, "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."—Rev. 14:13.

These thoughts are strongly suggestive of what it is to be an overcomer. It is, as the Apostle Paul expresses it, to become dead with Christ;—"Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him;" "If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." (Rom. 6:8; 8:17) If we would reach that point of deadness to the world which will in the end constitute us overcomers, we must die daily. But herein is a deeper significance than may be apparent at first glance. To die daily, to deny self and humbly take up and patiently bear the daily cross, to mortify the deeds of the body (*i. e.*, to put to death the former dispositions, etc.), means a great deal. It means more than merely the putting away of sin. As human beings we have no right to sin, and must renounce it when we first come to Christ, as only such can be accepted of him. But as new creatures, partakers of the divine nature, through a subsequent more intelligent re-dedication of all our ransomed powers to the service of God alone, and a consequent begetting of the holy Spirit to a new divine nature, our business is to die daily to the ordinary and otherwise legitimate ambitions, hopes and aims of the present life. Or, as Paul expresses it:—"Be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God" (Rom. 12:2); that is, we are to submit our minds, not to the earthly, but to the heavenly influences which will dictate to us in every matter great and small.

The heavenly influences draw a distinct line of demarkation between things earthly and things heavenly. Upon the one side are the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, which are of the world (1 John 2:16); while on the other side is that "simplicity and godly sincerity" whose delight is in the beauty of holiness, and whose adornment is a meek and quiet spirit, submissive to discipline, patient in tribulation, always abounding in the work of the Lord and delighting only in his manifest favor.—2 Cor. 1:12.

But who is sufficient for these things? Who can walk so contrary to the course of this present world? Surely none who have any considerable measure of the world's spirit. It is only as we become filled with the Spirit of God that we can do these things. Our sufficiency is not of ourselves; but "our sufficiency is of God." "It is God that worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:13) He it is who, for the asking, will so fill us with his Spirit that we can go forth from victory unto victory.—"If ye . . . . know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him."—Luke 11:11-13.

God bestows this grace upon all that diligently seek it of him, through our Lord Jesus Christ, our Redeemer, our Head, our Leader and Teacher. Therefore, says Paul, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me;" and again, "The love of Christ constraineth me." (2 Cor. 5:14) Those who have the Spirit of Christ, which is also the Spirit of God, the holy Spirit, are his disciples under his teaching and training. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Thus it is, that God works in us through Christ to will and to do his good pleasure, while in his strength we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. (Phil. 2:12) And he also further works in us to this end by all the incentives of his exceeding great and precious promises, his providences, his discipline, training and teaching and also by the sweets of that fellowship with himself, with Christ and with his saints, which is our present and daily privilege.

It is plain, therefore, that as Christians we have a life work before us. It is not enough that we covenant with God to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, and that we find ourselves accepted in the Beloved: that is only the beginning of this higher life. Then begins the work of overcoming, of dying to self and to the world. And who ever found it easy to die?

But now, look away from the struggle of this death to the old nature, and consider the new nature that at the same instant is developing its powers. Every victory gained in the crucifying of the flesh gives the new nature more room to develop and to expand its powers; and as the spirit of the world and the will of the flesh recede, we find ourselves more and more in the company and fellowship of our Lord. True, it is, on the one hand, the fellowship of his sufferings, but on the other, it is the fellowship also of his joys. We enter with him into the joy of knowing and doing our Father's will. Like him, we have meat to eat that others know not of; and we sit together with him in the heavenly places of communion and fellowship. The deep things of God are ours, the precious things symbolized by the gold within the typical Tabernacle,—"the exceeding great and precious promises" and a lively appreciation of them, the deeper experiences of divine grace, the abiding presence of the Father and the Son realized, the fellowship with the Father and with the Son, and the communion of saints.

These are some of the present rewards of dying daily to the world and becoming correspondingly alive toward God. The new nature, daily becoming more and more alive toward God, has an increasing sense of the value of these spiritual blessings; and with such appreciation comes a more earnest, ardent longing after more and more of the fellowship and favor of God, and more intense longings after holiness. The language of every such heart is beautifully expressed by the Psalmist,—"As the hart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?"—Psa. 42:1, 2.

This hungering and thirsting after righteousness, this reaching out after God, this patient, loving submission to all the heavenly influences of divine grace through whatsoever channels they may flow to us; these are all parts of the transforming work that will, in the end, make us overcomers. To resist continually those influences which would conform us to this world is to die daily to the world, to overcome the world, and to refuse to be conformed to this world; while to cultivate the higher spiritual aspirations is to be transformed, changed, to be developed as new creatures begotten to the divine nature. This process of dying daily to the things that belong to this world and of being transformed by the renewing of the mind to the divine nature and likeness is the Christian's most important life work; and if it be diligently pursued we shall at last be accounted worthy to be of the spiritual seed, which, in the resurrection, shall receive its own appropriate body, like unto Christ's glorious body. (1 Cor. 15: 38, 48, 49) But this selfward work does not end with self, for it includes a glowing zeal for God which, by example and precept and diligent service, ever strives to push forward the great work of the Lord.

In this view of the matter it is clear that this great work before us requires patient, watchful diligence, spiritual ambition and effort, fervency of spirit and persevering energy and faith in God. Only those who have and who cultivate these qualities can ever hope to be "overcomers"—"dead with Christ."

It was such considerations that prompted those earnest exhortations of the Lord and the apostles to faithfulness and diligence in our warfare against the world, the flesh and the devil. We are reminded, too, that in our warfare we wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with the invisible powers of darkness strongly intrenched both in the world and in the downward tendencies of our fallen flesh; besides which there are innumerable arts and wiles of the adversary, against which we must maintain a vigilant watch.

We cannot afford, therefore, to slacken our diligence, or to grow negligent in availing ourselves of any of the means of grace, or to waste the precious time granted to us for this overcoming work in idly dreaming of the crown, while we fail to bear the cross. Let us be up and doing, for "the time is short," the work is great, the way is narrow, the obstacles are many, the foes and their devices increase: let us be sober, let us be vigilant. But let us not forget that the work is the Lord's, in the sense that his strength supplied to us is vouchsafed to accomplish it, and that he who has begun the good work in us is able to complete it; and he will do so, if we let him; *i. e.*, if we follow his leading, doing his will.

To do this requires faith: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith." A wavering faith will hold on, with one hand at least, to the things of this world, as "something tangible," being afraid to let go and trust in the things unseen and to live for them alone. But our Lord encouragingly says, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." (John 16:33) Having overcome, he has long since entered into his glory; and it is the Father's good pleasure to permit those to share that glory with him who, when tried and proved, as he was proved, under the discipline of fiery trial, shall not be found wanting in faithfulness and zeal for God.

Let us, then, as many as would-be counted worthy to live and reign with Christ, take heed, not to the examples of the multitudes of those who name the name of Christ, but, first of all, to the perfect pattern, Christ Jesus, and secondly to those most faithful ones who follow in his footsteps of self-denial and of zeal for the cause of God.

M. F. RUSSELL.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Question.—How do the Jews reckon the date for the Passover?

Answer.—Their first month Nisan (also called Abib) was reckoned as beginning with the first new moon after the Spring equinox, in Palestine,—not quite the same as here. And if the new moon preceded the equinox a day it did not matter: the important point was that the moon should be at her *full* on the 14th of the month, the day for the killing of the Passover lamb.

The importance of the moon's being at her full was that the moon symbolized the Law Covenant as the sun symbolizes the Gospel or New Covenant (Rev. 12:1) and the offering of our Lord to Israel as their King, the day before he was crucified, represented the *full* of their blessing: from his rejection, then, they as a nation began to wane.

THIRTEEN QUESTIONS ON THE ANGLO-ISRAEL THEORY

One who read the treatise on this subject in our issue of Jan. 15, asks several questions, which we answer in order below:—

Question.—(1) If the "ten tribes" do not exist as a nation, but returned to Palestine with the Jews under Cyrus, how do you account for the failure of Amos 9:15?

Answer.—We did not say that the ten tribes returned to Palestine with the Jews under Cyrus. We said that during that long captivity the division and jealousy disappeared; and that then, and ever since, the names Jews and Israelites no longer distinguished as between descendants of the two and the ten tribes, but were used indiscriminately in referring to the same people. We proved this by many New Testament references; and referred to the fact that no Jew today will pretend to say from which tribe he descended. Although the tribal lineage of but few of the early believers is given, these show that the Jews were mixed tribally;—Paul was of the tribe of Benjamin, Barnabas of the tribe of Levi, and Anna, the prophetess, of the tribe of Asher. We proved that only a *few* of all of the tribes returned to Palestine when Cyrus gave the permit to *all* under the name (not of Judah but) of *Israel*. We proved from the Scriptures that such of all the tribes (a remnant) as accepted Christ became spiritual Israel, that many ("all Israel") were blinded and will not have their eyes opened until the full number to complete the bride of Christ has been taken from the *Gentiles*. (Rom. 11:25-33) We showed that all of that nation who abandoned the promises and circumcision ceased in every sense of the word to be of either natural Israel or spiritual Israel.

We are not obliged to account for the failure of Amos 9:15, for it has not failed. It is not yet fulfilled in the return of the "Jews," "all Israel" to Palestine. This Scripture was evidently in the mind of the Apostle James, when, after hearing Peter's explanation of God's sending him to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, he said:—

"Simeon hath declared how God at the first did [or made a beginning to] visit the Gentiles, *to take out of them a people for his name*. And to this agree the words of the the prophets: *After this* I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David."—Acts 15:14-16.

The throne of David was over all the tribes and here represents the throne of the greater David—*the Beloved Son* of God—about to be established *after this*.

Question (2).—Zechariah, who prophesied about 250 B. C., *after* the return of the Jews from Babylon, mentions the return of Joseph as yet future. Why, if Joseph had already returned?

Answer.—Your question indicates great prejudice and blindness which you must get rid of if you would *see* the truth. You say, "the return of the *Jews* from Babylon," but Ezra (3:1; 7:13; 9:1) says that it was *Israel* that Cyrus set free, and *Israel* that came to Palestine with him. And the next company under Nehemiah, ninety years after (and after Zechariah's prophecy), knew no division in *Israel*.—See Neh. 9: 1, 2; 11:3, 4, 20.

Turn now to Zechariah's prophecy. Note that the theme beginning chap. 9:9 and concluding chap. 10:4 relates to and was fulfilled at our Lord's first advent; as also the 11th chapter. (See particulars in MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. III., chap. 8) 10:5-12, to which you refer, evidently applies to the second advent of our Lord. Notice that while Judah, Joseph and Ephraim are mentioned (See 9:13; 10:6, 7) they are not, as formerly, mentioned as antagonistic or even rival kingdoms, but as *unitedly* sharing divine favor;—of the *same kind* and at the *same time*. The Lord does not mention Israel as one nation and Judah as another; but mentioning the chief tribe of each part of the once divided nation, he so to speak clasps their hands and assures them that the coming favor will be to both and to all the tribes of the covenanted seed.

Question (3).—At what time in the forgotten history of the race did the house of Joseph enjoy the birthright blessings of Gen. 48:19?

Answer.—The *birthright*, with its "double portion" of the promised land (Deut. 21:15-17), went to Ephraim and Manasseh, the sons of Joseph; and the blessing, "let *them* grow into a *multitude* in the midst of the earth [margin, *land*], made the double portion almost a necessity. Nevertheless, notice carefully that the ruling power went to Judah. —See Gen. 49:8-12.

You possibly refer specially to Jacob's declaration, Ephraim "shall become a multitude of nations." The marginal reading corrects this to read "*fulness* of nations." But the *fulness* of what nations? We answer, Ephraim became the fulness of multitude to the tribes, or nations, or peoples* of Israel. Look in your "Teacher's Bible" at a map showing Canaan as divided among the tribes, and note the goodly portions given to the children of Joseph (Ephraim and Manasseh) on the west of Jordan; and then note how the "branches went over the wall" or river; see the large tract east of Jordan. In all they had about one-half of Canaan. These large appropriations of the best of the land were because these tribes were *multitudinous* amongst the tribes or nations of Israel. The map shows Manasseh more numerous than Ephraim at the beginning: but soon, as Jacob had prophesied in this blessing, Ephraim became the greater, so that when the federation of tribes split and formed rival kingdoms the influence of Ephraim's *multitudes* among the nations or tribes was so great that the side which he espoused took the name Israel, and sometimes because of his numbers and influence all were called Ephraim.

Now turn to Gen. 49 and *compare* the blessings upon Judah in vs. 8-12 with those upon Joseph (including Ephraim and Manasseh) in vss. 22-26. Both blessings are great, but that of Judah is by far the greater.

* The same Hebrew word rendered *nations* in Gen. 48:19 is rendered *the people* in referring to the twelve tribes, in the following passages:—Josh. 3:17; 4:1; 5:6, 8; 10:13; Judges 2:20.

The statement, "The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob, *by the name of*† the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel; even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee," is not a promise for the future but a recounting of Joseph's past experiences at the hands of his brethren. His blessings, as enumerated, are multitudes of children and estate. If any think the prosperity of Joseph's children among the tribes does not fulfil all this, let them recognize the fact that Ephraim and Manasseh constituted a *majority* of the *dispersed* Israelites now commonly called "Jews" after the name of their great capital city, Jerusalem. Surely, the Jews are a fulness amongst all nations, and prosperous as no other people. They are, as predicted, *lenders* to many nations (Deut. 28:12), and in a peculiar manner are pushing or goring all peoples to the ends of the earth. (See Deut. 33:17, Revised Version) So much so that every nation is seeking to get rid of them.—"These are the ten thousands of Ephraim and the thousands of Manasseh."

Question (4).—Must not Israel exist *as a nation* before the fulfilment of Jer. 3:18?

Answer.—No; neither will Judah exist *as a nation* at that time. This verse merely tells of the gathering of Israel and Judah for the purpose of re-establishing them in their own land. This prophecy corresponds to that of Isaiah 11:12-16. They walk "*with*" each other and "*come together* out of the land of the North [where they have *been togcther*, all recognized as Jews] unto the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers." Those who think erroneously that the Jews are only two of the tribes, and that the peoples of Great Britain and the United States and the British Colonies are parts of the ten tribes, would have all these peoples—over *one hundred millions*—go *with* the Jews to the little corner of the earth called Palestine.

Do you ask, Why are Judah and Israel mentioned separately by the prophets if they are to be *one people*, dwelling together as Jews, at the time of the fulfilment of the prophecy? We answer: Because these prophecies were written before all had gone into captivity to Babylon; and had the national name Israel alone been used Jeremiah's hearers would have supposed that Judah was not to share in the promised blessing. For this reason also it is shown that there will no longer be factional differences between the two members of the one nation,—as there had been for over two centuries up to that time.

Question (5).—Has Deut. 32:26 ever been fulfilled?

Answer.—This prophecy by Moses was not concerning a part but against "the *whole* house of Israel." If taken literally as it reads in our common version of the Bible it has not yet been fulfilled, for the *remembrance* of Israel continues. The Hebrew word here used, translated *remembrance*, does not signify *knowledge* (as the questioner evidently supposes), but rather *memorial* or *scent.** *Pleasant* remembrance of Israel is to cease—we may say *has* very generally ceased (except with themselves and the true spiritual Israel). The modern name for Israelites—"Jews"—is becoming a *stench* instead of a *scent* in the nostrils of the world, which shortly will "drive them" into their own land as predicted in the Word of the Lord.

Do you object to this answer? Then we will refer you to the inspired Apostle Paul. Let him settle the matter as to whether or not "*all* Israel" as he knew them in his day—not lost—is here referred to by the Prophet Moses. Paul quotes part of verse 21 verbatim, with other prophecies against *Israel*, and applies them without qualification or limitation to "all the house of Israel" living in his day—not lost, but well known, called "Jews"—living at Jerusalem and scattered throughout the world. He specially addressed some living at Rome.—See Rom. 10:19-21; 11:1, 7-12, 25-32.

Question (6).—What did the Jews mean when they said, "Will he go to the dispersed among the Gentiles?"—John 7:35.

Answer.—The meaning of this is plain. There were probably more "Jews" living outside Palestine, among the nations, than resided in Palestine. The latter, however, were accounted the more faithful and devoted, in that they clung to the *land* of promise as well as to the promise. It would not occur to a Jew that anyone claiming to be the Jewish Messiah would go to the Gentiles; and so when our Lord spoke of going away they wondered if he would go to the Jews residing in the surrounding nations. The Apostles did this afterward—preaching to the Jew first and afterward to the Gentiles. It was to these "dispersed" "Jews," "Israelites" of "our *twelve* tribes" that James and Peter wrote epistles.

† Preferred reading of old MSS.

* The same Hebrew word here rendered *remembrance* is rendered *"scent"* in Hos. 14:7 and *"memorial"* in Esther 9:28.

Question (7).—Can we imagine *all* the branches of the olive tree broken off, and only wild branches in their stead?

Answer.—If you refer to the Apostle's illustration, we refer you to his own words, Romans 11:15-21. The Apostle does not say that *all*, but *some*, of the natural branches were broken off. Our Lord and the apostles and the several thousand brought to Christ shortly after Pentecost were *Israelites*, natural branches, and were not broken off. And doubtless many others among the Jews were found worthy of the light and blessing then due.

Notice that none of the savages living at that time in Britain and Ireland (without knowledge of God or of Moses or of the Law, or of Abraham, or of the promise, or of circumcision) could be here referred to. Such could not be branches of the "olive tree" to which the Apostle refers, whoever their ancestors may have been. The olive tree existed complete in the Apostle's day;—then some were broken off and cast away, *in order* that the *wild* branches from the Gentiles might be grafted in.

Question (8).—Does the declaration of Matt. 21:43, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you [Jews], and given to a nation [Greek, *ethnos*] bringing forth the fruits thereof," mean what it says, or that it was to be given to the conglomerate mass of nations known as the Gentile church?

Answer.—The church which you describe as the "Gentile church" (or churches?), composed of a "conglomerate mass of nations," is not recognized of the Lord's Word, except it be as mystic "Babylon." Your description fits Babylon,—it is "conglomerate;" it is composed of "nations," gentiles, *aliens;* it might therefore perhaps be called a "Gentile church." But it will inherit nothing but tribulation and destruction, as promised.—Rev. 18:4-12.

The kingdom heirship *was taken from* "Israel," the "Jews," as the Apostle testifies. (Rom. 11:7) It *was* transferred to the *nation* bringing forth the proper fruits. (See Luke 22:27; 12:32; 2 Tim. 2:12; Matt. 11:12) Which *nation?* do you ask? Well, not the British nation nor any nation of "this world." None of these "bring forth the fruits thereof." The best of them are Ishmaelitish. In none of them can we see even a prospect of the fulfilment of our Redeemer's prayer, "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth *as it is done in heaven.*"

Let us ask the inspired Apostle Peter to definitely and positively point out to us the *nation* to which the promise of the kingdom was *transferred* when it was taken from Israel after the flesh. The Apostle replies:—

"Ye [new creatures in Christ are neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, but ye] are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an *holy nation*, a peculiar people."—1 Pet. 2:9; compare Exod. 19:6.

Is the questioner a member and heir of this kingdom and yet ignorant of it? Perhaps he has been so mistaught in the "Gentile church" (good name!) that he knew of no other church than "the conglomerate mass" called Christendom, and had not heard of "the Gospel of the kingdom" and the "peculiar people."

Question (9).—Jeremiah says, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah." (Jer. 31:31) Does not this mean that the covenant made with the Hebrew race is for them alone?

Answer.—The Law Covenant was with the Hebrew race alone; but the original promise to Abraham was for the blessing of all the families of the earth. The New Covenant began to operate as soon as it was sealed with the precious blood of Christ, and throughout this Gospel age it has "*justified*" all who come unto God through Christ—the household of faith. When this age ends it will be made effective as a covenant with "all the house of Israel" whose blindness will be turned away that they may "look upon him whom they have pierced." But next in order the light and knowledge of the blessing and privileges of this New Covenant will be granted to every creature—for all of whom it was sealed. See the leading article in this issue. Jeremiah's prophecy mentions both Israel and Judah because when he wrote they had not been reunited, and to have used the name Israel alone or even "all Israel" might at that time have been misunderstood as not including Judah, whereas he specially addressed Judah, with whom he resided.

Question (10).—What is implied by Simeon's words,—"Mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the gentiles [heathen] and the glory of *they people* Israel?"—Luke 2:30-32.

Answer.—Jesus is not only to be the glory of Israel, but the light of the world;—eventually, he shall lighten every man that cometh into the world. (John 1:9) As to Israel—What

Israel is here meant? is probably your inquiry. We reply, (1) Christ is the glory of the church, the true Israel of God (Rom. 11:7); and (2) he will be the glory of fleshly or natural Israel when their eyes are opened and they are received by him under the New Covenant. Earthly Israel (under Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets) shall then as the agents and representatives of the heavenly Zion become a blessing and a praise in the whole earth—as the earthly representatives of the spiritual kingdom of Christ.

Question (11).—When will Isaiah 41:21, 22 be fulfilled?

Answer.—Evidently at the close of this Gospel age, as indicated by the Apostle Paul, who almost quotes the words.—See Rom. 11:26, 27.

Question (12).—Isa. 48:11, 12 says, "I will not give my glory to another. Hearken unto me, O Jacob, and Israel, my called." Will this *glory* ever be given to Gentiles? Is it not for Israel only?

Answer.—You totally misapprehend the Scripture you quote. God gives his glory to no one (neither to Jews nor to Gentiles), but keeps it for himself. Read verses 9 to 11 as one subject. Verse 12 begins a new subject. Compare Isa. 42:8.

Question (13).—Does the Apostle Peter (1 Pet. 2:9, 10, 25) refer to Gentiles? If so, when were they sheep, and when did they wander away so as to make *return* possible?

Answer.—Peter was the Apostle to the circumcision, Paul to the uncircumcision. (Gal. 2:7, 8) Peter accordingly addresses those who had been Jews, Israelites, non-residents of Palestine. But please note carefully that he is not addressing "lost" Israelites; but the large class of Israelites of all tribes, who after the Babylonian captivity made their homes amongst the Gentiles. Peter tells where they resided. See 1 Pet. 1:1.

However, do not lose sight of the fact so clearly stated (Gal. 3:5, 6) that these called from amongst the Gentiles are *fellow-heirs* and of the *same body*, priesthood, or holy nation, with the remnant of all Israel which received Christ.—

MIRACLES AT LYDDA AND JOPPA

APRIL 4.—Acts 9:32-43.

"Jesus Christ maketh thee whole."—Acts 9:34.

This lesson calls us back to the period when the church had rest from persecution—probably about A. D. 40. In divine providence it was a time for the rooting and establishing of the Christian faith. The general dispersion of believers noted in a previous lesson had not yet taken place; but the apostles were actively circulating throughout the towns and villages of Palestine;—as is here stated of Peter's visit to the believers at Lydda. We pause to remark that believers in the days of the apostles lived lives so separated from the world, that the name "saints" (holy ones) was appropriate to them. So let all true Christians today live—consecrated, holy, separated lives, copies of God's dear Son, to the extent of their ability. The habit in the Roman Catholic church is to wait several centuries; until his evil deeds are forgotten, and then to canonize a man or woman as a "saint," often in recognition of services rendered to Papacy and against the truth.

The healing of the paralytic, Æneas, was a very notable evidence of the power of the Lord, very similar to the healing at the temple gate, Beautiful. Here, as always, the great Apostle made sure that none should think the power exercised to be his own;—distinctly affirming that Jesus, the Messiah, whom their rulers had crucified, had performed the cure and was therefore not dead, as they supposed, but risen.

The valley called Sharon, very fertile, was thickly settled, and Lydda was one of its towns. We are not to presume that all the people became true Christians, but that they were convinced of the power of Jesus; and doubtless some of them consecrated themselves to him and became true disciples.

The holy Spirit was evidently guiding the Apostle and using these occasional miracles to draw attention to the Gospel which Peter preached. Thus he "found" the man who, under divine providence, was to be cured. Thus also at the right time, when he was near (about nine miles away), Tabitha (*Aramaic* language) or Dorcas (*Greek*) died, and afforded the opportunity for one of the most remarkable miracles ever performed;—a parallel to our Lord's greatest. It would not, however, be correct to suppose that thus our Lord's words were fulfilled, which say, "He that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also; and *greater works* than these shall he do." (John 14:12) These words can only be understood to refer either (1) to a future work, in which the church will share with her Lord, during the Millennium, or (2) it may be understood as ranking the works of spiritual quickening and revival as higher than physical healing and revival. Our Lord's ministry was prior to his offering of the sin-offering, and the general impartation of the holy spirit to believers; and hence his work was chiefly physical healing and the uttering of parables and dark sayings not to be fully understood by any not imbued with the Spirit of adoption.

We must dissent also from the views of some, that this power or gift, exercised so readily by the Apostle Peter, is a general power possessed by all of God's people—then or now. Peter did not upbraid the believers, the "saints," saying, Why did you not heal Dorcas, when sick, or revive her when she died? Even Peter himself healed comparatively few; probably there were plenty of palsied and blind and otherwise sick in the valley of Sharon; surely, there were multitudes of dead. But every evidence proves that these powers were special and for a special purpose—to introduce the Gospel to the attention of the people, and not for the purpose of dispelling sickness and death, either in or out of the church. On the contrary, the Apostles taught that this age is the time in which the faithful are to suffer, if, by and by, they would reign with Christ: to rejoice in tribulations, knowing that these, rightly endured and enjoyed, will work out for the faithful a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

The name Tabitha signifies *Gazelle;* "called Dorcas by the Greeks on account of its bright, flashing eyes." Whether or not this name was appropriate, whether Dorcas was a graceful, bright and beautiful woman, we cannot know; but it evidently fitted her well as a noble Christian woman. Nay, her face must have beamed and her eyes must have sparkled; for she had a warm, generous spirit, as testified by her sympathetic and energetic helpfulness of others. O that the spirit of loving self-sacrifice for others might more and more abound in God's people, male and female! O that more might be able to surround the coffins of true Christians and testify to evidences of loving service—earthly food or clothing or, better still, spiritual food and robes of Christ's righteousness or, still better, if possible,—both.

PROVERBS

"Never let your Christian life disown its past. Let every new and higher consecration and enjoyment into which you enter be made real to you by bringing into it all that Christ has already trained within you of grace and knowledge."—*Bishop Phillips Brooks.*

"Only love seeks after love. If I desire the love of another, it can surely only be because I myself have love toward him. We are not to be loved by those whom we do not love. It were an embarrassment rather than an advantage to receive love from those to whom we would not return it. When God asks human love, it is because God is love."—*Spurgeon.*

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"TO BE TESTIFIED IN DUE TIME"

A correspondent sends us a published answer to the question,—"Since Christ gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time (1 Tim. 2:6), and since the great majority of mankind has not had the privilege of this testimony, how and when will it be given?" as follows:—

"Christ has already been 'testified' as a ransom for all, by his incarnation, in which he lived in our nature in this world; by the voice of God acknowledging him as his only begotten Son; and by the manifestation of his power in his behalf in raising him from the dead.

"The point involved in the question, as we understand it, is, How far is God under obligation (if we may so speak)

to bring these facts before every individual of mankind? In answer to this let us ask further, Has not God done all that is necessary on his part, to give the world sufficient knowledge of the gospel in every age? It is his plan to work through men; and thus every one who receives light and truth becomes a debtor to his fellow men, to make known that light and truth to them. If he does not do this, and those within his reach live and die in darkness, who is responsible? Is not God's throne so far clear? . . . .

"Again: it will doubtless be admitted that God has in mind just the requisite number to people this earth, and when this number have embraced the Gospel, the call will cease, and the eternal state begin. But if all who have not heard the Gospel are to have another chance, and have the Gospel pressed upon them till they do receive it, there would be in the end a sufficient number to people several such worlds as this. Thus the whole course of events shows the plan of God's providence to be this: to gather out from each generation those whom the Gospel reaches, till the requisite number of people are gathered out for his name, then establish the promised kingdom. And that the time has been so far prolonged is owing to the dilatoriness of men, not to any limitations of the provisions of the grace of God."

URIAH SMITH.

Our correspondent wishes to know what we think of this interpretation of the text in question.

We think it very illogical and unsatisfactory. Really three answers are given, or three parts to the one answer, and we will review these in order, separately.

(1) It is *manifestly* untrue and unreasonable to claim that Christ was or could be *"testified as a ransom"* BEFORE HE HAD PAID THE RANSOM PRICE, as this writer claims. Our Lord's own testimony is that he came into the world *to give his life a ransom.* The ransom was not *given* before Calvary, and could not be testified to *truthfully* until after that event. Indeed, while the *laying down* of our Lord's life, finished at Calvary, was the ransom-*price*, it was not *presented* to the Father or formally paid over *"for us,"* until after our Lord's ascension. He ascended up on high, there to appear in the presence of God *on our behalf.* In the typical sin-offering for Israel, this presentation of his sacrifice as man's ransom-price to God was typified by the sprinkling of the blood upon the mercy seat and before the mercy seat.—See *Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices.*

Besides, this wrong view excludes from testimony of any kind all except the Israelites; for the remainder of mankind were without God and had no hope. (Eph. 2:12) Furthermore, the Apostle does not say that the ransom *had been* testified, but on the contrary he puts it future—*to be* testified in due time.

The *testimony* referred to in verse 6 is the explanation of the *knowledge of the truth* of verse 4, just as Christ a *ransom for all* is the explanation of the statement that God will have *all to be saved* (verse 4). The testimony must extend to *all*, in order that *all* may have the promised knowledge. Verse 7 agrees, also, declaring that the Apostle himself was even then engaged in giving this testimony. How unreasonable the claim, therefore, that Christ gave this testimony in full. The Apostle declares that this testimony *"began* to be preached by our Lord"—but it has continued by the apostles and all the faithful church since and must continue until it has reached *all* and brought *all* to a knowledge of the truth.

(2) Respecting God's "obligation" to save few or many, or to testify the terms of salvation to few or many: He had no obligation originally; nor has he any obligations now except such as he has voluntarily assumed. But he has voluntarily, of his "grace," assumed some obligations;—toward Israel, toward the church of Christ, and toward "all the families of the earth." As shown in our last issue, all of these obligations are set forth in the great Abrahamic Covenant. As shown, that Covenant is *unconditional.* It is therefore a first-class *obligation.* Moreover, it was sworn to by the Almighty. God wished us to know positively that he *obligated* himself; so that when the Law Covenant was *added* and still later the New Covenant was *added* (both added, as we have seen, for necessary and useful purposes) we might still know that neither of these could render void or "of none effect" the original, wide promise. (Gal. 3:17) Hence God assured us of the *blessing of all* through the seed, by two immutable (unchangeable) things—his *word* and his *oath.*—Heb. 6:18.

All men are to be "blessed" by being brought to a knowledge of God's gracious arrangements in Christ. *All* must be blessed with sufficient "light" to see Christ as the *"way,"* the *"truth,"* the *"life"* and the *"door"* to divine favor everlasting. The *testifying* of this to all "in due time" will be the *blessing* of all as provided for in God's oath-bound Covenant.

(3) The third answer is no less unreasonable than the others. In MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., page 170, we give figures to prove that several times the entire population of the world for the past six thousand years could be comfortably provided for on this planet. Anyone can figure it out for himself; there is no need for anyone to be deluded by the oft repeated nonsense that the earth is one vast cemetery, and that if the dead from Adam until now were all restored to being they would be unable to find even standing room.

Mr. Smith is the foremost teacher amongst "Seventh-Day Adventists," who hold that no one but Seventh-Day keepers will be saved; explaining that they are God's *"little* flock." Now put this claim (and the total known numbers of Seventh-Day keepers, of the past and the present) alongside the claim above that—"God has in mind just the requisite number to people this earth; and when this number have embraced the Gospel the call will cease and the eternal state begin."

How do those propositions harmonize? The present population of the world is estimated at above fifteen hundred millions, and yet these do not begin to populate this planet—there are millions of acres without an inhabitant. Mr. Smith teaches that the end of all hope is nigh, even at the doors, yet, according to his reasoning above, it will require Seventh-Day Adventists nearly a million years to convert enough people to their view of matters in order to properly let the Gospel call "cease and the eternal state begin." Nor does he leave himself a loophole by claiming that God will exercise miraculous power to increase the number of Seventh-Day keepers, for he says again, "God has done all that is necessary on his part;" "it is his plan to work through men."

O, if Brother Smith and his zealous colaborers could only see clearly the full meaning of this one Scripture,—"The man Christ Jesus—gave himself a *ransom for all*—to be testified in due time,"—it would straighten out all their difficulties and introduce them to the antitypical Sabbath.

How else could the oath-bound Covenant be fulfilled.—than by the Millennial reign of Christ and his "little flock," the "royal priesthood?" How else could the benefits of the ransom be made applicable to *"all"* to "every man" and "for the sins of the whole world?" How else could our Lord ever be "the true Light which *lighteth every man that cometh into the world?*" (John 1:9) How else will he ever *"draw* all men unto [or toward] himself" than by the presentation to all of the same truths which now constrain or draw us? How many will so make use of the blessing—the *light*, the *drawing* and the *knowledge*—as to conform to the requirements of the New Covenant is another question entirely. But there is no question that the work of the glorified church in the Millennial kingdom will be the fulfillment of God's oath-bound Covenant. (Gal. 3:29) But first the "little flock," the Christ (Head and body), must suffer many things and enter into glory. All the "members of his body" must be "lifted up" to shame, and share their Lord's ignominy and all must also be "lifted up" to glory, to share his honor. Then, the Seed complete, its work will be glorious.

GOD'S "PECULIAR PEOPLE"

"Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, *a peculiar people;* that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light: which in time past were not a people, but are now the people of God."—1 Pet. 2:9, 10.

We look in vain for this "holy nation" amongst the various nations of the world today. The pathway of even the best of those denominating themselves Christian nations is marked with blood and violence and various evidences of selfish rapine. The very best of them would fall far short of any reasonable standard of holiness. They are all, as the Scriptures declare, parts of the kingdom of darkness under the prince of darkness, "the prince of this world." who still rules the "kingdoms of this world."

This "holy nation" was founded by our Lord Jesus, and had no existence before his advent. The basis upon which it was founded was the "ransom for all" which he gave at Calvary, and the beginning of the construction of his kingdom was at Pentecost. Since then it has progressed after a manner

which is adapted to his purposes, though very contrary to the manner of the world and the nations of earth. It is unknown to the worldly, as it is written, "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew him not."

This kingdom is an ecclesiastical kingdom—a church-kingdom; but even if we look amongst the numerous church-kingdoms which have sprung up in the world (each of which claims to be the kingdom of God's dear Son), we find that this "holy nation" or kingdom is none of these. It is not the Roman Catholic church or ecclesiastical kingdom, nor the Greek church, nor the Armenian, nor the church of England, nor the Methodist church, nor the Lutheran, nor the Presbyterian, nor the Baptist, nor the Congregationalist. These all may have amongst their millions some members of this "little flock," this "holy nation," this true kingdom class which the Lord is selecting; but none of these institutions *is* the Lord's kingdom; none of them contains all who are his. There is only one record in the universe that enrolls all the members of this "holy nation" or kingdom: it is called, "The Lamb's book of life." Hence, if we examine church history, we shall no more find this "holy nation," this holy ecclesiastical kingdom, than amongst the temporal kingdoms. The historians knew not of the true "holy nation:" they saw and knew and recounted the incidents of the human organizations, called "Christ's kingdoms," but they knew nothing of the true one. Although it has existed from the day of Pentecost to the present time, it has always been the kingdom of heaven *suffering violence*—despised and rejected of men, insignificant and ignored in the sight of the world.—Matt. 11:12.

The reason for this is that it is a "peculiar people"—not peculiar in dress, nor in manners, nor in language, nor in foolish, senseless forms and idiosyncrasies; but peculiar in that it is separate from the world and the spirit of the world. It has the Spirit of Christ—a spirit of full consecration to the Lord, and separateness from the world and its selfish aims. It is peculiar in its adherence to the Word of the Lord as its only law. It is peculiar in that it rejects worldly wisdom when it conflicts with the divine revelation. It is peculiar in that it is in the world, but not of the world. It is peculiar in that it has a decided faith and acts in harmony with its faith, and with zeal. It is peculiar in that it is self-sacrificing and knows no will but the will of its King. It is peculiar in that it knows the truth and is able to give a reason for the hope within, while others merely speculate and wonder and doubt.

The King, when establishing this kingdom, forewarned all who would be of it that, in proportion as they possessed his character and his truth, and were thus "children of the light," and likenesses of himself, who was "the light of the world,"—in that proportion they would have the enmity of the world and the opposition of the flesh and the devil to withstand and overcome. In view of his forewarnings, "Marvel not if the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you;" "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own, but now ye are not of the world; because I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you;" "Whosoever will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution;" in view of these admonitions it should not surprise us that the nations of the world (political and ecclesiastical kingdoms) have always hated and persecuted the individuals composing this "holy nation." They seem to realize an antagonism, however little it may be expressed. This "holy nation" looks to a higher King and higher laws than any by which others are governed, and as Herod sought to destroy "him who was born king of the Jews," so the various worldly nations have sought (under the influence of the prince of this world) to hinder the development of this holy nation as antagonistic to their systems.

Nevertheless, we note the care with which the apostles pointed out that all who compose this holy nation shall, so far as possible, "live peaceably with all men"—avoiding strife and contentions, except where principles are involved; and even when contending "earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," to manifest the spirit of meekness and patient forbearance, that "whereas they speak against you as evil-doers, they may by your good works which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation." He urges, therefore, all of the holy nation, saying, "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: . . . For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as servants of God. . . . For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. . . . For even *hereunto were ye called:* because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously."—1 Pet. 2:13-23.

Thus the King of this "holy nation" set for every member of it an example that they should walk in his footsteps. He declared that his kingdom was not of this world; consequently neither does the kingdom power of this "holy nation" belong to this present age. It awaits the return of the King himself, who said, "If I go away, I will come again, and receive you unto myself." He has promised, moreover, that when he comes again it will not be in a body of humiliation for sacrifice on behalf of the sins of the world—for this sacrifice he has already accomplished to the full: He comes to reign, and has promised that his "holy nation" shall be associated with him in the reign of righteousness, wherewith he will "bless all the families of the earth."

But we notice further the Apostle's statement that this "holy nation" or kingdom is also a "royal priesthood." We look amongst the priesthoods of earth, but we find that the priestly office is distinctly kept separate from the kingly office, everywhere. Indeed, they are generally antagonistic. The kings and royal families usually represent the highest developments of ambition and self-gratification: the priests of earth, theoretically at least, present sacrifices, and thus seek to make atonement for sins. Priests do not exercise kingly authority, nor kings condescend to priestly services. But in this "peculiar people" the priesthood and kingship are united.

It was so with the King himself,—as a *priest* he offered up his own life, unselfishly, for the redemption and blessing of others. As a *King* he still has the same unselfish character and will use his kingly office to carry forward to all mankind, and make available to all, the blessings, liberties and privileges purchased with his own precious blood. His reign will be for this very purpose;—and for the establishment of righteousness and the extirpation of evil and those who adhere to it. The King himself is the great High Priest of this "peculiar people," this "holy nation," this "royal priesthood;" and it is required of each individual member of this "holy nation" that he shall be a *priest;* that he shall be a *sacrificer;* that he shall partake so much of the loving and generous disposition of the King that he will desire to do good unto all men, as he may have opportuniity, especially to "the household of faith;" and that he shall lay down his life for the brethren—in the service of the truth, in their interest. In these and all respects they must all be conformed to the image of God's dear Son.—Rom. 8:29.

This experience as sacrificers in this present time as sufferers for righteousness' sake, as tempted and tried and able to sympathize with the weak and the erring, is a necessary part of the educational discipline which must be undergone by this priesthood before they are accounted ready to enter the honors and powers of their divine kingdom, as representatives and associates of the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Nor does their priesthood end when their kingly powers begin, for it is written concerning their future reign,—"Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth." (Rev. 5:10, 11) This "peculiar people," this "holy kingdom" or nation all of whom are "royal" priests, has a great work to do when established in the kingdom power; for it is none other than the promised "Seed of Abraham," which, accrding to the divine promise, is to have entrusted to it the great work of blessing all the families of the earth, by bringing them to the knowledge of the Lord, and into harmony, if they will, with the New Covenant sealed by the precious blood of the King. As explained by the Apostle Paul (Gal. 3:16, 29), the King himself is the head of this "seed," this "peculiar people," this "royal priesthood;" and they are reckonedly members of his body, and with him they complete this holy seed to which is committed the work of blessing.—Rom. 11:31.

Israel after the flesh, the natural seed of Abraham, supposed that they would have inherited this great privilege and honor, of being the divine representatives in blessing and enlightening the world; but when the King came unto them as "his own," they received him not, as a nation, but to as many as received him, the faithful remnant, to them gave he "liberty to become the *sons* of God" and members of this "peculiar people," this "royal priesthood;" and he then visited the Gentiles to take out of them suitable ones of sufficient number to complete this foreordained priesthood. This "royal priesthood" then, be it noticed, is not the priesthood of Levi, even as this "holy nation" is not the nation of Israel. It is a *new* priesthood, a *new* people and a *new* nation, which never before had any existence, "which in times past was not a nation," and was not a priesthood, but now is become the

people of God, the "royal priesthood," the "holy nation."

The Apostle notes still another distinctive feature pertaining to this "peculiar people," saying that it is a "chosen generation" or race. How strange it would at first seem that the Apostle should speak of this peculiar people, gathered out from amongst various races, Jews and Gentiles, as being a special, particularly *chosen race:* as though they were a different family entirely from the remainder of mankind. If tribal relationship be understood, is not this "peculiar people" a mixture of all the races? And if all humanity be considered, are not these "peculiar people" of the *same race* as the remainder of mankind?

Ah, no! they are a new race, a race separate and distinct from all others. True, they once were of the same race, and some belonged to one branch or family and some to another; but their King, in calling them to be this "holy nation," set aside entirely their previous genealogy and started them as a new race. As members of the Adamic race they were already slaves of sin and under condemnation of death; but their Master and King, who redeemed them from sin and death, opened the way for a full completion of the great divine purpose, and they were *begotten again*, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. (John 1:13; 1 Pet. 1:3) They are therefore "*new* creatures" in Christ Jesus. (Gal. 6:15) To them old things have passed away, and all things have become *new*.—2 Cor. 5:17.

The apostle therefore was right in his declaration that these are a different generation or race from others of mankind. He was right also in speaking of them as a "*chosen* generation"—the race which God himself is selecting for the accomplishment of his great and wonderful plan, first declared to Abraham, but not understood, and expected to be fulfilled in Abraham's literal posterity. In reality this salvation "*began* to be preached by our Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him." (Heb. 2:3) True, God has certain provisions and blessings in reservation for the natural seed of Abraham, and let us remember that to them also came the first opportunity, and the first place, in this new, select, spiritual race or "chosen generation." The Head or Chief of this chosen race, the twelve subordinate chiefs, the apostles, and many of the other members of this "holy nation" came from the literal seed of Abraham; but as a whole the natural seed was not worthy to become the "chosen race" or generation; but only to as many of them as received him (Christ), to them gave he liberty to become the "*sons* of God,"—by *regeneration*.—John 1:11, 12.

Grasping the full statement of the Apostle with reference to this peculiar people, this holy nation, this new or regenerated race, this royal priesthood, we can see readily that none of the human systems or organizations of earth, past or present, fit these demands. But we can see also that the conditions are well fulfilled in a "little flock" of which we may find scattered members here and there today, and all the way back to Pentecost. They are all self-sacrificing priests, who serve the living God through Christ Jesus acceptably, by serving one another, and all men as they have opportunity, and in general serving the Gospel. Fully consecrated to God, and their imperfections (unintentional) all covered by the merit of the Redeemer, they are indeed a "holy nation," with higher and different aims from those of the world, and with a different spirit, they are indeed a peculiar people. And the royalty of their priesthood, although unknown to the world at present, shall be revealed in due time; for it is declared by the inspired Word, that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," "waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God."—Rom. 8:19, 22.

When the glory of these sons of God, this chosen race, this royal priesthood, shall be revealed in the establishment of the Messianic kingdom, during the Millennium, the entire groaning creation—the whole race of Adam, condemned in Eden, but ransomed at Calvary—shall be blessed by this great "Seed of Abraham." Instead of their groanings they may have joy and peace, through accepting the blessed arrangements of the New Covenant; and as a result, by the close of the Millennial age, all who will may have experienced the blessings of the divine promise, "God shall wipe away tears from off all faces and turn away the reproach for being his people." Then shall be brought to pass the saying which is written, He that sat upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."—Rev. 21:4, 5.

Is it any wonder that the Apostle declares that each and all of these "peculiar people" should make it the first, the chief, practically the only business of life, "to show forth the praises [the virtues of character and plan] of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light?" And the showing or the telling of these is the preaching of the Gospel, whether it be done in public or in private, by word of mouth or by printed page. And this, the chief business of the peculiar people, begun now, will continue to be their business throughout the future, though under more favorable circumstances, in the majesty of the kingdom, with power to enforce the wise and just and wholesome laws, and with love and mercy to help and to succor the weak and the erring, and gradually to restore them, if they will, to *all that was lost* in Adam.

What a wonderful Gospel! What a wonderful privilege to be permitted to engage in its proclamation in any manner! Truly, all of the peculiar people can appreciate the testimony of the great Apostle Paul, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ."

RELATIVE VALUES OF THE HEAVENLY AND EARTHLY TREASURES

"A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."—Luke 12:15.

This statement of our Lord reminds us also of the exhortation of the Apostle Paul, "Let us lay aside every weight, and run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus." All that the Lord's people have and are should be consecrated to their most efficient use in the divine service, according to their understanding of the teaching of God's Word. As we reflect upon it, how manifest it becomes that all earthly riches which are not consecrated to God are only weights and hindrances to the Christian. And not only so: it is not enough that our all be *consecrated* to God as an acceptable sacrifice; for if all be consecrated to sacrifice, and yet *never subjected to the flames of the altar*, of what avail is it, except as a broken vow to rise up against us in judgment?

Many, indeed, are foolish enough to think that abundance of possessions is the only thing worth living for; and when they are obtained they put their trust in these uncertain riches and forget God. Their time and attention are all engrossed and their interest absorbed in the accumulation and care of the earthly treasures, which shut out all nobler aspirations toward spiritual things. It is for this reason that the Lord cautions his people not to be overcharged with the cares of this life. It is right to be charged to the extent of our necessities, and also to the extent of the responsibilities of our stewardship in the Lord's service, to be provident and thoughtful, not only for ourselves, but also for others whom it may be in our power to assist; but to be charged is one thing, to be *over*-charged is quite another. To be *over*-charged is to permit corroding care and anxious solicitude to absorb our thought, our time, our interest, and so crowd out spiritual interests and spiritual aspirations.

In the discourse from which the above text is selected, our Lord was endeavoring to give to his disciples that ground of confidence in God which would enable them to cast all their care upon him, knowing that he careth for his children as a wise and loving parent, and that his tender mercies are over all his works. He drew illustrations from the the sparrows, the ravens, the lilies of the field and the grass, showing that God had not forgotten nor failed in his care of even these comparatively insignificant things, then added, How much more will he clothe and feed you, who are of more value than many sparrows. The very hairs of your head are all numbered, so minute is his knowledge of you. Do not be anxious about what you shall eat, or what you shall drink, or wherewithal you shall be clothed; for your Father knoweth that you have need of these things. Seek the kingdom of God *and his righteousness*, and all these things shall be added [supplied as needed] unto you. Sell that you have, and do good with it, as wise and faithful stewards of your consecrated talents, and fear no want of any good thing in consequence; for "no *good* thing will the Lord withhold from them that walk uprightly."

What a blessed promise that is! Not only will he make all, even the adverse things, work together for good to them that love God, to the called according to his purpose, but he will not withhold any really good thing from us. Can we fully appreciate this tender, loving solicitude and watchful care for us personally? Can we understand how it takes cognizance of every interest, temporal and spiritual, and how, with wise and loving forethought, it maps out our present course and guides our steps in view of those eternal interests which at present we cannot fully comprehend? Perhaps we cannot fully do so all at once; let us take it into con-

sideration, praying for a clearer vision of the love of God, and by and by the blessedness of these promises will dawn upon us more and more; and we will begin to realize more fully than ever before that, having placed our all upon the altar of sacrifice, subject to the consuming flames of the altar, we thenceforth belong to that blessed "little flock" to whom our Lord addresses these comforting teachings, and whom he exhorts to loving, patient faith, saying, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Truly, those who follow the Lord's leading in this narrow way of sacrifice and of faith are only a little flock; for only a few thus apply their hearts unto instruction and wholly follow the divine direction. Consequently, only a few know the blessedness of the realization of the Lord's tender care. But to those who follow this leading there is a growing sense of his love which the daily walk with him deepens, confirms and sweetens as the years go by, and as experience makes plain the guidance of his loving hand. As one after another of the trials of life come, and we mark his overruling power, which caused even the adverse elements to work together for our good, faith takes deeper root and the character becomes more stable, sturdy and pleasing to God.

It is for this very purpose that the Lord permits us to be subject to the various vicissitudes of the present life, and that those who belong to the kingdom of heaven suffer violence at the hands of an unfriendly world. There are lessons of immense value to be learned in this hard school of experience—lessons of faith, of fortitude, of heroism, of courage, of endurance, of meekness, of patience, of sympathy for the suffering and of loving helpfulness to others. There are works of grace to be wrought out in us which only the hard experiences of life can accomplish. For instance, we would be inclined to lean too much to our own understanding, if we were not at times brought face to face with problems that baffle our skill. It is when we are "afraid to touch things that involve so much," that in our perplexity we come to him who has kindly said, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee," and ask him to undertake for us. Or we might be inclined to trust too much in the arm of flesh, if the arm of flesh had never failed us, and the disappointment driven us to the Lord to seek the shelter of his wing. Or we might learn to trust in uncertain riches, if moth and rust had never corrupted nor thieves stolen the little or much of our earthly possessions. Or we might have been satisfied with earthly friendships and earthly loves, had not their loss sometimes left us alone with God to prove the sweetness of his consolation. Or we might be weak and imbecile, had not the storms of life swept over us and the very emergencies of our case nerved us to courage, endurance and Christian fortitude. In view of all these necessities to the development of character, the Christian can truly feel that whatever the Lord permits to come upon him will be made to work together for his good; and in this confidence he can peacefully sing,—

"If on a quiet sea toward home I calmly sail,
With grateful heart, O God, to thee, I'll own the favoring gale.

"But should the surges rise, and rest delay to come,
Blest be the tempest, kind the storm, which drives me nearer home."

It would be a mistake, however, to suppose in view of the Lord's promised care over all our interests, that he would in every case make things work together for our *temporal advantage.* There was at least one in the company to whom our Lord was speaking who seemed to interpret him thus, and who therefore requested his interposition on his behalf in the matter of an inheritance, saying, "Master, speak to my brother that he divide the inheritance with me."

In reply to this request Jesus said, "Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" and then followed the instructions concerning the superior value of the heavenly treasure, showing that the earthly things are not worth the strife to obtain them. Jesus had not yet come to judge the world, but referring to that time when he would be the divinely appointed Judge of all the earth, he showed that the searching scrutiny of that judgment would extend to all the minutiæ of human affairs. Every selfish act, every injustice, every unkindness, every wrong thing, will *then,*—but not now, except in very few instances,—receive its just recompense of reward. "For there is *nothing* covered that shall not be revealed, neither hid that shall not be known. . . . . Whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which ye have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops."

Men and women in their present selfish condition of mind and heart, and intoxicated with the spirit of the world, although thus forewarned, do not consider with what shame and confusion of face they will one day have to meet the record of the past, when the little mean acts which they supposed none they cared for know of, and the unkind words to the defenseless which they thought no one else would ever know all rise up to bear testimony against them. Such often overlook their own folly, and consider that the penalties will fall only upon the criminal class. But the Lord's judgment will be discriminating and exact; "God shall bring *every work* into judgment, with *every secret thing;* whether it be good or whether it be evil;" and "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good."

In view of this judgment to come, when the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall be established in his kingdom, Paul says to all of the Lord's people who realize oppression or injustice or unkindness of any kind,—"Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. . . . . Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."

No, Jesus is not the Judge or divider of the earthly things now: that will be the work of the Millennium; and so far as the earthly things are concerned now, his people may suffer many injustices and difficulties of various kinds; but the Lord's counsel is to dismiss all anxious care concerning them, and, having food and raiment, to be contented and wait for the great reward of patient endurance.

Meanwhile, let Christians see to it that they are rightly exercised by all the disciplinary experiences of the present time; let them learn the lessons of trust in God and all the other valuable lessons so necessary to fit them for the exalted position to which they are called; let them rejoice in the present favor and communion with God which is the privilege of all the saints, and, with steadfast faith, look forward to the rest that remaineth for his tried and disciplined people.

Lay up for yourselves treasure in heaven, and let your heart be there. Then disappointments, ingratitude and all the vexing trials of the present life which go to make up the daily cross can be borne with a comparatively easy grace. Your life consisteth not in the abundance of the things you possess: you, beloved, are not dependent upon these earthly things; the Lord is the portion of your inheritance; yea, you have a goodly heritage. (Psa. 16:5, 6) "Fear not, little flock"—fear not to carry out your consecration to the full, keeping your little all upon the altar of sacrifice, and subject to the consuming fire, trusting all of your future, both for the present life and that which is to come, to the loving care of your covenant-keeping God; and, by and by, in the glory of the kingdom, you shall prove the superior value of the heavenly treasures when the victory of faith shall be fully realized. Praise the Lord for his abundant grace and his precious promises! M. F. RUSSELL.

INTERESTING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

IS THERE NO HOPE FOR POOR JUDAS?

Question.—I have read the TOWER article (Apr. 15. '96) in which you give reasons for believing that Judas had many opportunities above others of his time and nation; and that hence, while the nation crucified our Lord "ignorantly" and may be forgiven, Judas sinned against light and has therefore no hope, and has died the second death—the penalty of wilful sin. But I find it hard to give poor Judas up. Am I wrong in this; or is it an evidence that I have *more love* than others?

Answer.—By reason of the fall our entire race has suffered depravity both of mental and physical tastes—likes and dislikes; and many are by heredity disposed to call the good evil, and the evil good. Christianity does not select the least blemished amongst men, but oftener the more blemished; the less blemished often feel a self-complacency and satisfaction which hinders them from coming to God as repentant sinners and realizing that they can be justified only through the imputed merit of Christ. But those who do come to Christ, and hear him, soon learn how imperfect are their own depraved conceptions, and seek and obtain *his mind* to thenceforth be instead of their own judgments. "We have the mind of Christ," says the Apostle—it is our "new mind,"

we are "transformed by the renewing of our minds" so as to be able to "prove [know] what is the good, acceptable and perfect will of God."—Rom. 12:2.

Your question indicates that however much you have submitted your judgment to God's will on some questions, you have not submitted on this point. The reason seems to be that you are deceiving yourself into thinking that your sympathy with Judas is the *true* love which the Scriptures everywhere enjoin as the essence of Christian character. But you are deceiving yourself. To love an evil thing is on a par with hating a good thing. Both are wrong; both are sinful; both are evidences that the depraved mind is not renewed, remodeled, transformed into the mind of Christ. As well might the drunkard or the libertine claim that his *love* of evil things indicates more true love.

The mind of the Lord, inculcated by his Word, teaches that we are to love the beautiful, pure, true, noble; we are to love (in the sense of sympathizing with) the weak, penitent and oppressed who are seeking for the paths of truth and righteousness; but we are to "hate iniquity" and "every false way" and all the meanness and sin is wilful, against light and of the devil.

Cease to pride yourself upon your love for one of the most detestable characters known to the pages of history, of whom our Lord who so loved (sympathized with) the world that he laid down his life for it (—and greater love hath no man than this) said, "It had been better for that man if he had never been born." Adopt God's standpoint, as the Apostle says, "Be not deceived, God is not mocked, he that doeth righteousness is righteous [and approved of God], but he that practices sin [knowingly, wilfully] is of the devil."

For our part we have no thought of ever becoming more loving than the Lord: we accept his definitions, and seek to be conformed mentally thereto—the image of God's Son. We want to love just as he loves and just what he loves, and we want to hate what he hates. Of him it is written, "Because thou hast *loved* righteousness and *hated* iniquity; therefore the Lord, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." (Heb. 1:9) "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? . . . . I hate them with a perfect hatred."—Psa. 139:21, 22.

We are glad that neither Satan nor Judas nor any other creature will ever be tormented to all eternity. We are glad that a full, fair opportunity for coming to a knowledge of the Lord and of the way of righteousness will be granted to every member of Adam's race, but we are glad that, on the contrary, all who rejoice not in the truth but rejoice in iniquity will be utterly and everlastingly destroyed in the second death. We abominate Satan, who for over six thousand years has wrought unrighteousness and gloated over the evil and pain and sorrow which he has wrought, and who with clear knowledge of the redemptive work has for eighteen centuries opposed the kingdom and the great salvation. The person who could believe in Satan's conversion after all this battling against the light and the truth has a perverse mind, very sadly blinded by the god of this world.

SEEN MORE CLEARLY

Question (1).—In a recent number of the WATCH TOWER you show quite to my satisfaction that mother Eve was not reckoned as a separate individual, but as part of the body of Adam as much as before she was taken from his side, and that this the one sacrifice, once for all, covered her in him. But now I want to ask two questions: Is not this presentation a *little* different from the presentation on the same subject in MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., page 123?

Answer.—Yes; this statement is a little different from that in DAWN, and the next edition, now on the press, will show a few words of change on the page referred to. While the point is comparatively unimportant, and does not vitally affect any part of the plan of the ages, yet we spare no pains to present the truth as clearly and as fast as we see it. The trunkline of truth, the plan of the ages, is not only the best and safest route for the consecrated mind to travel in coming to a knowledge of the things which shall be, but, more than this, it is *the only through route.* Along this route, here and there, are side-tracks and switches which may require and must have straightening and alignment with the main track; but these are all "betterments," not impairments, of the road. But, anyway, we have never claimed for the DAWN verbal accuracy or infallibility. It is our enemies who cannot refute the general teaching of the divine plan, that seek to divert attention and arouse prejudice by crying, "Infallible!" The divine plan of the ages is so grand, that all the consecrated who see it realize that God is its author, whoever may be its promulgators, connected with the various steps of its presentation. Such rejoice with the clarifying of its every detail.

Changes in the *language used* in expressing the *same* thoughts have been made in several instances. (Notably VOL. I., pages 106, 107, 140, 157, 240, 279, 321 and foot notes of pages 124 and 288—the latter formerly an appendix. Also note *addition* of foot note on page 150.) These alterations of *language* are all, we trust, beneficial to the readers. They were made necessary by reason of two things:—

(1) *Enemies* have tried to put a false light upon our words, and to pick out sentences or portions of a sentence to use against the truth and to misrepresent the general teachings of DAWN;—thus we have been misrepresented by some as being "Universalists," by others as teaching a *second individual* chance or trial for all of Adam's race, by others as being in agreement with their blasphemous doctrine that God is the author of all sin and wickedness.

(2) *Friends* have honestly misunderstood our teachings. Unused to reasoning on religious subjects, many failed to see the *two* distinct parts of the one salvation; (*a*) the part between Justice and the *ransom* given by our Lord Jesus for *all mankind* by which he "bought" the whole world, and became Lord and Judge of all, with the right or power to grant lasting *life* to whomsoever he will; and (*b*) the part of salvation which relates to the purchased race, and the terms upon which they may individually avail themselves of the grace of their Redeemer, and obtain from him the life-everlasting which he (by virtue of his ransom sacrifice) has the right to give to all who comply with the terms of the New Covenant.

Our constant aim is to have the teachings of the WATCH TOWER and MILLENNIAL DAWN so expressed, that, like legal documents, they cannot be misunderstood. That we have not always succeeded does not discourage us; for we find that the inspired words of Scripture are frequently wrested by false teachers, and misunderstood by God's honest children. The difficulty encountered by the legal profession in *stating* matters so that they *cannot be misunderstood* is witnessed by the frequent contest of Wills. A case in point is the broken Will of the noted lawyer-millionaire, Hon. S. J. Tilden. Yet, presumably, his Will was the most painstaking paper he ever prepared.

We cannot hope that the plan is yet so stated that a "wayfaring man" cannot understand our meaning and enemies cannot misrepresent us. We trust that no false pride, nor false ideas of infallibility, will ever hinder us from declaring the truth, the whole truth, relating to God's plan, as he shall give us to see the truth.

Question (2).—Would the fact that, as pointed out in *Tabernacle Shadows of Better Sacrifices*, the church, the bride, of the Second Adam, joins in his sacrifice, have any bearing on this question?

Answer.—No; for it is only *after* we have been "justified" by the ransom price that we are *called* to be his bride, joint-sacrificers and joint-heirs with Christ.

THE DATE OF JESUS' BIRTH

Question.—It appears that a considerable number of Seventh Day Adventists are reading MILLENNIAL DAWN [The Lord be praised!] and are finding that their dates and theories are faulty. They are writing to the editor of the *Sabbath Herald* for help and further proofs. The editor sees what many of his readers do not see probably; viz., that the *date of Jesus' birth*, as clearly and forcibly set forth and proved in DAWN, VOL. II., *utterly destroys* the back-bone theory of Seventh-Day-Adventism in re the "Cleansing of the Sanctuary"—by showing as VOL. III. does, that they have not only misunderstood the *nature* of the "cleansing," but also the *time* of it, which they fix in 1844 instead of 1846 A. D.

The article referred to throws a lot of dust for the eyes of its readers, but really makes only two points, which I will thank you to answer.

(1) He claims that the date of Dionysius as given in foot note on page 54, DAWN, VOL. II., is incorrect.

(2) He claims that "two years before Augustus' death" Tiberius "was allowed the celebration of a triumph in Rome, and was then clothed by Augustus with PROCONSULAR POWER, *which was understood by all the people as* CO-SOVEREIGNTY *with himself.*"

I see that the first point is of no consequence, as it no more bears on the subject than does the date of my birth. But the second point is of consequence, if is proves Tiberius to have begun his reign two years before the death of Augustus.

Answer.—(1) The foot note referred to is in error, evidently a slip of the editorial pencil or by the compositor. It should read, and will be found in later editions, as follows:—

The year A. D. was fixed upon as early as the sixth century by Dionysius Exiguus and other scholars of that period, though it did not come into general use until two centuries later.

However, as you suggest, this has *no bearing whatsoever* on the subject, and might just as well have been the twelfth or any other century.

(2) The editor of *Sabbath Herald* finds his dates and reckonings all out of harmony with the testimony of Luke 3:1-3;—the *only* positive date given in connection with our Lord's birth and ministry, by which it can be connected with reliable Roman history. Like many others this editor has been misled by Josephus' unreliable dates, and having adopted them and fixed his theory thereon, as do many others, he must needs cast some discredit upon Luke's statement. There is not a shadow of doubt as to when Tiberius *began his reign* (A. D. 14); but this editor (and many others), having a false theory and date to uphold, claims that Tiberius began to reign and that his reign dated two years before he was recognized as Emperor, two years before the great Augustus had vacated the office by death.

The so-called proofs of this, which you quote, are absurd, and find their only strength in the ignorance of his readers: the editor evidently thinks that the words *"proconsular powers"* will be misunderstood by his readers to mean *imperial power*—a totally different thing. That the fallacy and weakness of the argument may be seen we quote from the *Standard Dictionary*, the highest authority, the meaning of proconsular and proconsul, as follows:—

"Proconsular.—The *dignity*, office, or term of office of a proconsul."

"Proconsul.—A Roman official who exercised consular authority in one of the provinces, or as commander of an army—though *not a Consul.*"

Illustration.—"Judea was henceforth to be incorporated into the province of Syria, with the *Proconsul* . . . . as supreme head *under the Emperor.*"

So far from *"proconsular powers"* signifying that Tiberius was made the Emperor, or that he shared imperial honors with the Emperor, these words signify an officer *under* the Emperor. And, indeed, there were several Consuls and Proconsuls in the great Roman empire. Nor would the vain and ambitious Augustus Cæsar, who changed the order of the calendar so as to perpetuate his name in one of the months with the most days and at the high noon of the year, be the kind of man likely to grant one mite of his honor or office to another, until death.

The fact is that students of chronology are quite at a loss for anything that will fix the date of our Lord's birth with *positiveness*, except it be this statement of Luke 3:1; and we accept it implicitly, as God-given, for our instruction. Besides, Luke was an educated man and shows himself to have been well ecquainted with the general affairs of his time. He connected the beginning of John's preaching of the kingdom of heaven at hand with the reign of Tiberius Cæsar for the very purpose of locating or fixing the event chronologically; and it would be passing strange if he would purposely misstate the matter. There is no question, in secular histories, as to *when "the reign* of Tiberius Cæsar" began; the only people to raise a question about it are those who, following the inaccurate records of Josephus, want to twist Luke's plain statement into harmony with a date two years earlier.

The beginning of the "Seventy Weeks" (490 years) of Israel's favor (Dan. 9:24) was so obscure and indefinite that the Jews could not and did not know *positively* when to expect the Messiah. No doubt this was of divine intention. Had the fulfillment of the *time* of this prophecy been apparent to the Jews, doubtless they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. Only a few dates as far back as the beginning of those Seventy Weeks can be accurately fixed, and they by reason of notable eclipses recorded in connection with them. Recognizing the fulfillment of the events of the *seventieth* week, and getting the date thereof from Luke 3:1-3, we are enabled to reckon back and know exactly when they began, regardless of the inaccuracies of records and the multiplied disputations of chronologists.

The best answer to such criticism is the re-reading of the plain statements of MILLENNIAL DAWN. On this topic see VOL. II., pp. 54-72; VOL. III., Chap. 4.

FRIDAY, THE CLOSE OF OUR LORD'S 3½ YEARS' MINISTRY

Question.—Mr. Totten writes as follows:—

"A brother writes us under date of Nov. 18, '96,—'By the way, have just ended a long correspondence with Russell; he has had to throw up the sponge on both the 3½ year ministry and Friday crucifixion!"

Mr. Totten gives a few lines of comment on the above. Now as a personal favor I ask if your opinion of these matters has *changed in the least* from that presented in DAWN?

Answer.—There is not a word of truth in the statement. It is "out of whole cloth" like Mr. Totten's Astronomical and prophetical misstatements exposed in our issue of May 15, '96.

We have not changed our opinion in the least from the presentation of these subjects in DAWN; we see not the slightest shadow of reason for any change on either subject.

GOD'S ACCEPTANCE OF CORNELIUS

APRIL 11.—Acts 10:30-34.

"Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins."—Acts 10:43.

Cornelius, noted as the first adopted son of God from amongst the Gentiles, was a Roman soldier, the captain of a company quartered in Cæsarea for the better preservation of order and the enforcement of the will of the Roman government, which, at that time, controlled Palestine. It may be that he was the very same Centurion mentioned in Luke (7:2-10) as a worthy, noble and generous man, of whom Jesus said, "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel;" and whose servant was healed as a reward of this faith. True, that Centurion was stationed at Capernaum, while Cornelius we find in Cæsarea; it is possible, however, that these bands of Roman soldiers were moved about from place to place as a better means of awing the people with a small number of soldiers. It would certainly be very remarkable to find two such Centurions of so remarkable a character residing so near together. And we are to remember that a period of about six years must have elapsed between the time of our Lord's healing the servant at Capernaum and the events we now consider.

The date of Cornelius' conversion cannot be positively determined from history, but from prophecy we may locate it with great positiveness in the year 36, A. D., because there the "seventy weeks" of Daniel's prophecy terminated. Our Lord was baptised at the beginning of the seventieth week (Oct., A. D. 29), was crucified "in the midst of the week" (April, A. D. 33). The seventy weeks ended the special favors of the Jewish nation (Oct., A. D. 36). That date, therefore, was the earliest at which it was possible for the Gospel to be sent to the Gentiles.

It would appear that Cornelius had been in an acceptable attitude of heart before the Lord for some time. We may reasonably infer, therefore, that God delayed the sending of the Gospel message to him for some particular reason. That particular reason, we see was, that the full period of the "seventy weeks" (of years) must be confined to Israel, as it is written. "He shall confirm the covenant with many for one week," altho he was to "cut short the work in righteousness" (so far as the nation was concerned) "in the midst of the week." The "many," to whom the covenant was confirmed for the remainder (3½ years) of the seventieth week, consisted of those worthy Jews who, beginning at Pentecost, were specially taught, and thousands of them converted, during this remaining period of individual favor to the Jew. We may, therefore, presume that Cornelius, having been for some time in an acceptable condition of heart, the Gospel went to him at the earliest possible moment—about Oct., A. D. 36.

We cannot properly speak of these experiences of Cornelius as a *conversion* or *turning* of his heart; for his heart was already in the right attitude, as was that of Saul of Tarsus. As the latter needed to have his knowledge *corrected*, so the former needed to have his knowledge *increased;* and then both needed to be accepted in the Beloved,—and to receive the Spirit of *adoption* as "sons of God."

The testimony is that, at the time of receiving this great blessing of the truth, Cornelius was in the right attitude of heart to receive it: he was hungering and thirsting after righteousness, and was fasting and praying for it. What a suggestion is here! If all people could be gotten into a condition similar to this described of Cornelius, we might expect the conversion of the whole world speedily. The great difficulty in the presentation of the Gospel is the unreadiness of the hearts of those who need it. This is true, whether of the savages of Africa or the philosophers of India and China, or the self-satisfied ones of so-called Christian lands,

They do not know the truth, and they cannot receive it, because their hearts are not prepared for it. And if the truth be received into any other than into a good and honest heart, it not only is not likely to bring forth a good harvest, but indeed may introduce a liberty (freedom from superstition, etc.) which may actually be unfavorable in its results. The constant effort of all, therefore, should be, not only to be in a proper attitude of heart themselves, but to see to it that those whom they approach with the truth are brought in contact not only with the knowledge and liberty which the truth carries, but also with its influence as a sanctifying and cleansing power.

In the vision granted to Cornelius the Lord commends (1) his prayerful attitude, which implied faith in God and a desire for harmony with him in righteousness; (2) his works of righteousness—his alms-giving, his endeavor to overcome selfishness and to copy divine benevolence. So we believe it is with all; whoever is in the right attitude of heart will be more and more moved to good works.

We have here also an illustration of divine methods; and we have every reason to believe that they are the same today. God did not miraculously fill the mind of Cornelius with a knowledge of the Gospel and the details of the divine plan of salvation;—nor does he do this today, altho some of his children evidently so misunderstand his arrangement. On the contrary, the Lord made use of his servant Peter in communicating the truth, in teaching those who were ignorant of it. Men accordingly were sent a considerable journey to find Peter, and Peter journeyed with them the same distance in order to preach the Gospel, rather than have any *miraculous* presentation of it.

The language of Cornelius, when Peter was come to his house, indicates an appreciation of the fact that the message was from God, and that Peter was merely the honored instrument. Cornelius, presenting himself and his household in the presence of Peter for instruction, said, "We are all here present *before God*, to hear all things that are commanded thee *of God*." Here was a proper respect for the servant of God as a servant of God and his Word; but also a full recognition that "every good and perfect gift cometh down from [our Father] above," and that the Gospel itself is "neither of man nor by man."

It is safe to say that Peter, as well as Cornelius, received a great lesson from the Lord in connection with this visit. He was learning that, altho the divine favor and privilege of the Gospel had been granted "to the Jew first," according to divine promise, nevertheless only true Jews could be acceptable with God, while "in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is [now] accepted with him" —through the merit of the sacrifice given "once for all" by him who has since been highly exalted and made "Lord of all."

Peter presupposes on the part of Cornelius just such knowledge as we would expect of an educated and influential man at that time, particularly if he were the Centurion of Capernaum who had personal contact with our Lord. He says, You have heard about this preaching of Jesus all through your country here, the matter is public, no one could live in this vicinity without coming to a knowledge of these general facts. They may have heard the facts misstated to some extent and misrepresented, but in a general way all know that our preaching is concerning Jesus of Nazareth: that he was anointed of God, the Messiah; that he received the holy spirit and with it power; and that he used this power in doing good and healing all oppressed of the devil (through sickness, etc.),—all of which, either directly or indirectly, are traceable to sin and thus to the author of sin, Satan.

Having briefly rehearsed the matters which Cornelius already knew, the Apostle rehearsed some matters which were not so generally known, but denied as incredible; namely, that the death of Jesus was not like the death of others, but was a sacrifice; that this sacrifice was acceptable with God as the ransom-price for sinners; and that God had "given assurance unto all men" (that the sacrifice was satisfactory and had been accepted on behalf of all men) by raising Jesus from the dead on the third day.—Acts. 17:31.

We have heretofore seen that our Lord Jesus was not raised from the dead a fleshly being, a human being, but a spirit being, and that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." We have seen that, accordingly, no one could see him as the resurrected spirit being, except a miracle were performed, either by granting special powers to see a spirit being, or by our Lord's appearing in a body of flesh on certain occasions (just as angels had done previously) for the purpose of the better impressing upon the disciples the two facts; (1) his resurrection, (2) his change of nature which prevented his being seen, except as he would specially "*appear*" or "*manifest*" himself. Thus, Peter here declares that the people in general did not see the Lord Jesus after his resurrection, but that God "*showed* him," unto "*witnesses* chosen before of God, even unto us."

Thus by these proofs of our Lord's resurrection God granted us the evidences of coming divine favor—proofs that Christ is empowered of the Father to be the Judge of all who are to be judged, the living (the angels who kept not their first estate and who are "reserved unto the judgment of the great day," and upon whom the death sentence has never yet been pronounced) and the dead (the world of mankind, "dead in trespasses and sins," and dead, in the sense that all are under the sentence of death).

The Apostle's discourse was orderly, and he next proceeded to show that all this was in harmony with what had been foretold respecting this long-promised Saviour, Messiah. Then, completing his argument and bringing it down and making a personal application of it to his hearers, he showed that, the penalty of sin having been paid for all by the Lord Jesus, and all judgment of the sinners having been transferred to the hands of him who "bought us with his own precious blood," it followed that he had full power and authority to extend the terms and conditions of the New Covenant; namely, the remission of sins to all who believed in him as their Priest (Redeemer), their Prophet (Teacher) and their King (Ruler).

We are not surprised to find from the narrative that this man, whose heart was so ready for the truth, who was hungering and thirsting for it, fasting and praying to be in a condition for receiving it, was so ready that he appropriated the words of the Apostle as the bread from heaven and the water of life for which he had been hungering and thirsting. It does not surprise us, therefore, that God immediately, in view of his full consecration, accounted him worthy of "the spirit of adoption;" and not only so, but also gave him some of the outward manifestations or miraculous "gifts," similar to those granted to the believers on the day of Pentecost.

The Apostle Peter, as he subsequently testified to his fellow-disciples at Jerusalem, was astonished to see that God in every respect treated the converts from the Gentiles the same as the converts from the Jews; and dropping all prejudice Peter at once grasped the situation and did not hesitate to offer to Cornelius symbolic baptism as the evidence or pledge of his consecration to the Lord; assuredly gathering that whomsoever the Lord counted worthy of the holy Spirit was worthy also of every other feature of the divine arrangement for the household of faith. With us also should it be the same: whoever we may find truly believing the Gospel of redemption and forgiveness of sins through Christ, and consecrated to God's service in him,—such, wherever found, are to be esteemed as brethren and fellowshiped to the full, whether or not they have seen every item of the truth now due. Further knowledge will come to the consecrated, and, as a fruit of it, obedience may be expected.

THE "CHRISTIANS" OF ANTIOCH

APRIL 18.—Acts 11:19-26.

"Then hath God also unto the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."—Acts 11:18.

Antioch was one of the chief cities of the world at this time: it ranked with Rome and Corinth. It was the capital of the province of Syria. The Gospel reached it as the result of the persecution which arose about the time of Stephen's martyrdom, in which Saul of Tarsus was one of the leaders. Some of those who had received the Gospel at Jerusalem when "scattered everywhere," got as far away as Antioch, about 300 miles from Jerusalem. They did not put their lights under a bushel, but endeavored to "show forth the praises [virtues, glories] of him who had called them out of darkness into his marvelous light." They met with hearing ears and believing hearts, under the divine leading and blessing. They no doubt thus eventually realized that their persecutions were part of the "all things working together for good to them who love God;" and those of right mind surely rejoiced that by any means they were permitted to be co-workers together with God, and to be used of him in his glorious work. These laborers were not apostles, nor even notable ones amongst the Lord's disciples, so that it was not considered necessary by the writer even to mention their

names; nevertheless we can be sure that however obscure amongst men, they were reckoned by the Lord as his jewels whom he will shortly gather, and who, numbered amongst those who turn many to righteousness, will shine as the stars for ever and ever. The testimony to their efficient work is,—"A great number believed and turned unto the Lord."

It is worthy of notice that believing is one thing and turning to the Lord is another thing. We fear that this distinction is too often forgotten, and that too many are satisfied merely to get their friends to believe some of the good things of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus, and do not press the matter on to the only legitimate and proper conclusion—a complete turning away from sin and the world; a thorough turning of every sentiment, hope, ambition and desire "unto the Lord," and into harmony with his divine plan. Let us remember the statement, "devils also believe;" and let us not rest satisfied with efforts merely to convince the head without convicting and regenerating the heart.

Many speak of the church at Antioch as "the first Gentile church" and of "Gentile Christians" and "Jewish Christians." All this is a mistake: there is not and never was a "Gentile church," nor a "Gentile Christian." We might just as well speak of a "heathen church" or a "heathen Christian," for such is the meaning of these expressions. There was a Jewish church under Moses, but there was never a Jewish Christian church, and there never will be. The way may have been smoother for a Jew to pass out of the partial light of the Law Covenant, than for the Gentile to pass from the outer darkness of heathenism into the full light of the Gospel; but, nevertheless, there was a positive transfer in both cases. Christianity is not a blending of the Gospel with Judaism, nor is it a blending of the Gospel with heathenism. Our Lord declared that he would not put a patch upon the Jewish system and call *it* Christianity, nor put the new wine of the Gospel into the old wine skins of Judaism; but that, on the contrary, he established a totally new thing; and that those who would enter his kingdom must first be begotten again, and ultimately be born again before they could share it.—John 3:3-8.

While we would contend earnestly for the truths and facts of the Gospel, we do not wish to be hypercritical as to the words and names. If, therefore, any have used the terms "Jewish Christians" and "Gentile Christians" merely through mistake of language, and have had the apostolic thought in mind, namely, that there is "neither Jew nor Gentile, bond nor free, male nor female, but ye are all *one* [a new one—a new church] in Christ Jesus," we have no desire to quarrel with such, nor to be captious; and yet we do respectfully urge upon all such the unwisdom of using terms which of themselves, and without particular private explanation, are misleading.

The Gospel was preached at Antioch at first, properly, to the Jews only; yet, when the due time for it to go to the Gentiles arrived, the Lord's providence opened up the way and showed his servants that Cornelius was not an exceptional case, but that the Gospel was to be preached in all the world for a witness, for the purpose of gathering his little flock from all kindreds, nations and tongues who should have an ear to hear it and to whom he would send it.

The progress of the interested at Antioch was a refreshment to the central company of believers at Jerusalem, and forthwith appreciating the fact that they would need instruction in the truth, and that the Lord would be pleased to continue to use human instrumentalities to this end, they at once dispatched Barnabas on a missionary tour. Barnabas, as a good, faithful servant of the Lord, was greatly rejoiced when he found the condition of matters at Antioch, yet, apparently, he found a condition of things to meet which he himself lacked certain qualifications. Of a loving and kind disposition, his visit no doubt was very helpful to them, but he apparently discerned that they needed instruction as well as exhortation, and immediately he thought of Paul, the wonderful Christian logician, and of how ably he could present the Gospel in its various features to those Grecians of a philosophical turn of mind. Accordingly he sought him and found him and brought him with him to Antioch. The results showed the wisdom of the course, and no doubt it was entirely ordered by the Lord. A year's stay in Antioch under the able teachings of Paul and under the loving ministries and exhortations of Barnabas resulted most favorably: not only was the church of believers well developed, but the multitudes who assembled received considerable instruction also, and thus the knowledge of the Gospel was greatly spread abroad.

Some have surmised that the name "Christian," first attached to the Lord's people at Antioch, was applied in ridicule. But it seems to us that the evidences all point to the contrary, and indicate that this was the name which the believers adopted for themselves, by which they would be known to outsiders. Had the name been a disreputable one we might have supposed it to be applied in ridicule; but since the basis of the name Christian is the word Christ, and since the word Christ signifies Messiah or the Anointed (of God), it must have been accepted as a most honorable name, or who would think that a divine anointing could signify anything dishonorable in the eyes of any man, Jew or Gentile.

This adopted name "Christian" indicates the healthy condition of the church, and testifies to the sound instruction which they had received from Paul and Barnabas. When later another company of Christians began to split up into factions, some calling themselves followers of Peter, some followers of Paul, some followers of Apollos, the Apostle reproved them for this, assuring them that it was an evidence that their views in general on the subject were fleshly, carnal, worldly and not spiritual. He told them that it was an evidence that as yet they were "babes" in spiritual things, and pointed out to them that neither Peter, nor Paul, nor Apollos, had died for them, and that at very most they were only servants of the Lord Jesus, who had redeemed them and who had sent them the blessing of the truth, using such instrumentalities as seemed to him good. (1 Cor. 3:3-23) What evidences we have all around us that the carnal or worldly mind prevails very largely today,—that very many who have named the name of Christ as merely "babes" in spiritual comprehension. The evidences of these conditions may be found in the fact that one says, "I am of Wesley," another, "I am of Calvin," another, "I am of Peter," and that in general the believers of the Lord Jesus are split up into parties and factions—Lutherans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Baptists, etc.

Moreover, it is not true, as some claim, that these names are merely forms and that they signify nothing. They do signify much: they imply that those who brand themselves with these names acknowledge the rules of various parties and factions, and that they are all more or less in bondage to human systems and traditions of men, and have failed to a large extent to realize the individual "liberty wherewith Christ makes free" all those who have come to him, and who are united to him only. Nor do we with many advocate the removal of these dividing fences of human creeds merely to construct of them a "union" fence, doubly strong, around the whole company of believers in Christ. On the contrary, we deny the propriety of any human fences, and hold that each individual Christian is to be united and bounden only to the Lord and to his instructions, and not to others, few or many. All the truly consecrated and truly united to the Lord will find themselves in fellowship with all others similarly united to him, and the bondage between these various members (the bonds of love and of common submission to the one Head and to all of his arrangements) will be the only bondage necessary to the complete operation of this body of Christ, according to the directions of his Word.

Let us each make it our highest ambition and aim to be Christians in the fullest sense of that word. To truly be a *Christian* implies a union with Christ; it implies a submission to him as our Head, it implies a share with him in the anointing of the priesthood for the work of sacrifice and of self-denial in this present time; it implies also an association with him in the anointing of kings and joint-heirs in the coming kingdom. Let us take and let us keep this holy name, and it alone; and let us make sure that we do not take this holy name in vain.

"MY SOUL, BE ON THY GUARD!"

Do not forget that our ever active Adversary seems to be granted additional liberty and power of temptation at the Passover season. Let each soldier of the cross be specially on his guard to resist him—steadfast in faith and good works and love. Let each also be on guard to help and not to stumble the "brethren" at this time. Pray for one another and for us; as we also remember all of you at the throne of the heavenly grace.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

Rev. Lyman Abbott, D. D., the now widely known "Unbeliever," was engaged by the "Hicksite Quakers," of Philadelphia, to deliver a lecture, and the Y. M. C. A. hall was secured for the purpose. The Secretary of the Y. M. C. A. concluded from all that he could learn that Dr. Abbott is an "Unbeliever," and that his use of the hall would not be in the interest of Christianity and the objects of the Y. M. C. A. and cancelled the engagement. We quite endorse his judgment, altho we well know that such a view of matters will be considered narrow by all "unbelievers." If Satan presented himself in human form, well dressed, as a liberal lecturer on "Higher Criticism," well fortified with "cunningly devised fables," he would find numerous defenders and plenty of willing hearers with "itching ears;" but if our Lord or the Apostles Paul or Peter presented themselves as exponents and defenders of the law and the prophets, and especially of the cross of Christ as the center of the Gospel and the power of God and the wisdom of God, they would find few attentive listeners. How we see fulfilling the word of the Lord by the mouth of the Apostle,—"The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own desires shall they gather to themselves teachers,—having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."—2 Tim. 4:3, 4.

The same question is causing a disturbance among "Christian Endeavorers." The next convention of this society is to be held in San Francisco, Cal., in July, and as it has been discovered that a prominent Evolutionist and higher critic otherwise known as "modern unbelievers," has been assigned a prominent place in connection with the appointments for public addresses, it is concluded that himself and others of like unbelief will endeavor to use the opportunity to make a good impression for their cause upon these "Young people." A religious press controversy has sprung up, and considerable heat has been developed on both sides.

ENEMIES OF THE CROSS OF CHRIST

This question must yet "shake" Christendom thoroughly; and no doubt we will surprise many when we declare that, in our understanding of the Word, the vast majority will be sifted out as "unbelievers"—so much so that to many it will appear that "the old fogy believers in miracles, and in the divine inspiration of the Scriptures," have been shaken out;—because the masses will accept the Evolution-and-unbelief theory.

As usual the adversary will endeavor to becloud the *real* question by sophistical statements. It will be claimed that the evolutionary or "unbelievers" theory is the true, the moral, the logical, the enlightened view; and no doubt some will even claim that it is the Scriptural view. Those left, faithful to the Bible, will be the theologically "hard" and "tough" and "unreasonable," covered all over with barnacles of human error concerning election, foreordination, predestination and eternal torment, and their false beliefs will not only injure their influence, but will tend to further discredit the Bible, which, more than ever, will be charged with the inconsistencies of every misbelief. And these in turn, realizing the effort to overthrow their faith in the Bible as the Word of God, will not only hold it the faster but also hold the tighter all the human falsehoods and inconsistencies attached to their faith in the name of the Bible, during the "dark ages." Nor can we hope that many of these will get free from these shackles of error until the fall of Babylon (Rev. 18:1-4) opens their eyes to the true situation.

However various the forms which the question may take, it will nevertheless still be—for the cross or against the cross; soldiers of the cross or enemies of the cross of Christ,—believer in the *ransom* or deniers of the *ransom*. All the so-called "higher critics," or "unbelievers" in the Bible, are of logical necessity believers in Evolution; and all believers in Evolution are of logical necessity deniers of the fact that a *ransom* was given for sinners by our Lord, for they claim that none was necessary. Denying original sin by a fall, and denying a ransom from the condition and penalties of a fall, they are denying the very center of the Gospel—the cross,—that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that he rose for our *justification*. Hence also they deny justification by faith and through the precious blood. (Rom. 5:1, 9) Hence, by whatever name such "unbelievers" are known, as deniers of the very essence of Christianity they are not Christians,—not believers in Christ in the only way in which belief in him is genuine according to God's Word. Instead, they are "the enemies of the cross of Christ."—Phil. 3:18.

"In the cross of Christ we glory,
Towering o'er the wrecks of time.
All the light of sacred story
Gathers round its head sublime."

The "Hicksite" branch of the Quakers, for which Dr. Abbott is to speak, utterly repudiates the doctrine of Christ's vicarious atonement—the ransom. This is in keeping with our observations above.

* * *

France has begun the manufacture of a new quick-firing gun—the "Casnet." It is claimed that it will throw a shrapnel shell, loaded with 300 bullets, five times a minute, a distance of about four miles. Other "Christian nations" must similarly prepare to do murder wholesale, and Germany has already begun work on a somewhat similar weapon. The time for turning all this energy to useful arts of peace is not yet, but it is near, thank God.

* * *

The Cretan war question is only a part of the Turkish question; and our remarks on the latter in our View of Nov. 1, '96, apply in general to all with which Turkey is related. We do not expect "a general European war which will destroy present civilization"—that destruction is not due yet; but we do expect, now or soon, such a reörganization of Turkey's affairs as will open Palestine and permit the return of the Jews as settlers—forbidden by Turkey since 1891.

* * *

The *Armeblatt*, an Austrian military journal, describes a new murder-weapon (for use upon fellow beings of other "Christian (?) nations" and against savages, but not, we may presume, to be used against the Turks, so long as they can pay the interest on their bonds). What an amount of human ingenuity now employed on instruments for murder will be changed to new channels—to bless the already "groaning creation," when the Prince of Peace shall take control and cause wars to cease unto the ends of the earth!—Psa. 46:6-10.

ILLUSTRATION OF WASTED MENTAL ENERGY

Here is a description of this weapon of destruction:—

"An engine of 16 horse-power actuates a four-wheeled rubber-tired cycle, carrying two rapid-fire guns. These two guns, mounted on pivots, one in front, the other in the rear, can each describe a semicircle, the motion being effected automatically.

"The discharge is controlled by the motor mechanism itself, and can take place as well when the cycle is in motion as when it is at rest. The number of shots fired per minute can be varied from 50 to 700. The cycle carries 500 projectiles for each gun.

"The attendant, seated on the cycle between the two guns, has only to train them and then start his engine. He is protected in front and behind by shields, fixed to the guns.

"The cycle as a whole is also protected against bullets, and even against small artillery projectiles. Besides, the mechanism of discharge, acting automatically, keeps on working, even after the attendant is disabled.

"On a good, smooth road this cycle can go at a speed of forty-five miles an hour, so that it could outdistance any other kind of artillery. We can hardly imagine the effect that fifty or a hundred of such cycles would produce when all in action at once."

* * *

The Glasgow *Herald* (Scotland) gives a lengthy and detailed account of the Meeting of the Glasgow Presbytery on March 2, at which the terms of union with the United Presbyterian church were discussed. We note the growing sentiment favorable to a partial union with the civil government; based upon the erroneous assumption that the kingdoms of this world have become Christ's kingdom, and that he is the King. Oh! how changed the world's affairs will be when Immanuel's reign has really been inaugurated: "When the kingdom is the Lord's and he is the governor among the nations." "Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is done in heaven" is still the prayer of those who know the King's Word.

The following utterance of Dr. Ross Taylor was approved by the Presbytery: Both churches agree that—

"The great principle of national religion, the principle, namely, that as Christ was *King of Nations*, all nations were bound to own him and to have regard to his authority in the making of their laws and in the shaping of their procedure, and not only so, but that *all were bound*—nations and rulers—*to recognize the church of Christ* and to *promote its interests in every way* consistent with its spirit and enactments. That was the position which they maintained with regard to national religion, and that, he was glad to say, was a position in which their United Presbyterian friends in the conference which had been held thoroughly agreed with them. They were *at one on the points as to the duty of nations and rulers to recognize the church of Christ and to promote its interests in every way consistent with* ITS SPIRIT AND ENACTMENTS."

* * *

The spirit of *federation* is growing rapidly in Great Britain, as the following from the London Daily *Chronicle* (March 6) shows:—

"On Monday night the Lord Mayor and Lady Mayoress will receive at the Guildhall probably as many as 3,000 delegates and representatives of the National Council of Evangelical Free Churches which meets in the City Temple, and in the Memorial Hall on the following three days of next week. This is not simply the first meeting in London of the National Council. Practically it is its first formal meeting. Originating in Nov., '92, as a 'Free Church Congress,' with a lamentably meagre attendance, the movement as a whole illustrates how tremendous may be the development of a very simple proposal.

"Thomas Law, organizing secretary, was able to report an enormous growth in the number of local Non-Conformist councils and county federations, the influence of which it is the object of the National Council to focus upon the religious, social and perhaps even the political life of England. Since last year the associations have increased with still wilder impetuosity, not merely scores but hundreds of them having been surprised into useful existence, in almost an incredible way. On Tuesday morning this National Council will assemble with the commanding authority of delegates to the number of 1,200, and 'personal members' probably exceeding that number, representing over 10,000 English evangelical congregations. The churches represented include the Congregationalists, all the Baptist communities, all the Methodist 'Societies,' the Presbyterian, Church of England, the Free Episcopal churches, even the Society of Friends, and a host of minor religious bodies—Unitarians, however, being excluded as not conforming to the strict interpretation of the constitution."

* * *

The Pope, whose representatives have for some time past been specially blessing the Spanish war ships as they left for Cuba, found that Spain did not get victory as a result of his blessings, and now changes his course and poses before the world as the advocate of peace and liberty—sending a letter to the Queen of Spain urging peace and very liberal laws for Cuba and Porto Rico.

* * *

The following extracts from a recent speech by Lord Salisbury, premier of Great Britain, shows the wisdom of the confusion of the world's language for the period of the reign of sin and death; and that present tendencies toward one language might work eventual ill, were it not that the kingdom is near at hand. The London *Spectator* says:—

"He remarked on the singularly rapid spread of the English race and the English language over the surface of our planet, and expressed the belief that what is said in that language will before long be intelligible, and not only intelligible, but actually understood, over almost all the world. And he insisted that this might turn out to be either a great blessing or a great curse, according to the spirit in which those who mold the convictions of the English-speaking races choose to guide the formation of those convictions. It is, in fact, a sort of reversal of the effect which the confusion of tongues,—which is said to have fallen upon the different families of the human race in the vain attempt to build a tower intended to scale the heavens,—was supposed to have produced. In Lord Salisbury's view the difficulty which different races have found in mastering each other's language has not been by any means an unmixed evil. It has served as a kind of non-conducting medium to limit the mischief which irresponsible and mischievous talk so often produces. St. James has told us that 'the tongue can no man tame.' But what no man can tame may yet to some extent be deprived of its poisonous influence through the difficulty it finds in penetrating the speech of another people of a quite different race. For example, we Englishmen have no doubt missed the point of perhaps nine-tenths of the French witticisms produced at our expense, while the French have missed the point of even a greater number of foolishly contemptuous phrases in which Englishmen have poured forth their ill-advised conviction of their own immense superiority to Frenchmen. Had this non-conducting medium never existed, can it be doubted that the irritation of France against England and of England against France would often have been far greater than it has been? . . . . Let English become something like a universal language, and we shall soon find that the velocity with which either clever or ignorant ill-nature propagates its mischievous influence over the world will be indefinitely increased. With the electric telegraph working in a speech universally understood, words of hasty wrath will have a far more deadly effect than they have now, and we may find ourselves at war before we have had time either to define our purposes or explain our meaning. In short, as Lord Salisbury truly said, the universal currency of the English tongue will produce either a good or a bad effect, just in proportion to the wisdom or the folly, the self-control or the license, of the English-speaking races. . . . . But if Englishmen learn to scream, and Americans to bluster, and public opinion to discharge itself violently in muddy geysers of boiling passion in every separate Colony and State, then the universal spread of English may prove a great calamity and some day issue in a great catastrophe."

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD—ITS VALUE

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you, through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto God and life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us by his own glory and virtue."—2 Pet. 1:2, 3—*Reading of Sinaitic manuscript.*

The first question coming to us in connection with these words of exhortation is, To whom were they addressed? Are these the instructions given to sinners? Is this the way by which sinners are to approach to God? No. These instructions are addressed to those who are already justified through faith in the precious blood of Christ, as indicated in the preceding verse. They are addressed—"To them who have obtained like precious faith with us [the apostles] through the righteousness of our Lord and Saviour,* Jesus Christ."

The suggestion clearly is that to become believers in Christ Jesus—even justified and fully consecrated believers—is not sufficient; there is to be a progress in the life just begun which will continue as long as we are "in this tabernacle," and, if faithful, be completed in "the first resurrection." The thought of the Apostle is not year by year revivals with year by year backslidings, but rather a continued *progression* in the new life. This thought is quite in contradiction of the experiences of very many who assume the name of Christ, which, alas! are too often expressed in the lines of the hymn:—

"Where is the blessedness I knew, when first I found the Lord?
Where is the soul-reviving view of Jesus and his Word?"

The prevalent idea amongst this class of Christians might be termed alternate subtractions and additions of grace and peace. They first get a blessing, then lose it, then find it again to lose it again, and thus continue. There is a logical reason why this course is so prevalent, and why so few know anything about the multiplication which the Apostle here mentions—"Grace and peace be *multiplied* unto you." The reason is that the majority of Christians lack a knowledge of those things which are necessary to preserve to them the grace and peace found through their primary faith in the Lord as their Redeemer; and much more do they lack a sufficiency of knowledge to *multiply* their grace and peace. The vast majority occupy the position mentioned by the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 3:1) "I, brethren, could not write unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal—even as unto babes in Christ;" "when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God."—Heb. 5:12-14.

* Reading of Sinaitic MS.

An error on one subject often leads to many errors on many subjects; and so it is in this case: the doctrine of eternal torment as the penalty for the fall, from which only believers will escape, has distorted the judgment and misdirected the efforts of many of the Lord's people. With some of the most earnest the first thought is personal escape from eternal torment, and naturally the second thought is to help as many others as possible to escape such an awful eternity. With this thought as the mainspring of conduct, we cannot wonder that by such chief attention is paid to "saving sinners" and bringing them into the condition of "babes in Christ." But after they become babes comparatively little is done to develop them in the knowledge of God, that they may grow up into the full stature of manhood in Christ. As babes they are continually fed upon the milk, and hence are unused to the strong meat, so that when they do attempt its use, they are more likely to be choked by it than to be strengthened.

The Apostle points out the proper course by which the believer, having made a proper start, shall continue onward and upward in his Christian development—multiplying his grace and his peace. It is all-important, however, that he begin right, that he be truly begotten "by the word of truth," "the faith once delivered unto the saints"—which the Apostle here terms "*precious* faith." This is not the faith promulgated by the higher critics. Their faith is far from precious. Their faith denies the fall, denies the ransom and all necessity for it, and consequently denies the resurrection based upon that ransom. Their faith consists in believing in their own judgments as the criterions of what is truth and what is error, and in doubting the testimony of Moses and the prophets, of the Lord and the apostles. Such a faith is not the "*precious* faith," is not "the faith once delivered unto the saints." And those who are building upon such a faith are not of those here addressed by the Apostle, and we need not expect that either their grace or their peace will be multiplied. We trust, however, that the majority of our readers are of those who can sing with the spirit and the understanding also,—

"My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand: all other ground is sinking sand."

The true foundation, upon which we should build, is,—faith in the righteousness of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,—faith that his sacrifice for sin was once for all a full and complete ransom price for Adam and all his posterity, so that all of these, as in due time they shall be brought to a knowledge of Christ, may, if they will, obtain cleansing and eternal life under the gracious terms of the New Covenant. It is those who build upon this foundation that may hope to multiply their grace and peace. How?

The Apostle answers—"Through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord." At first it may occur to some that this has but a slight meaning, and that it simply signifies that we come to know that there is a God, and that there is a Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. But the knowledge of God means far more than this to the advancing and developing Christian: to him it means an intimate acquaintance with the Father and with the Son, a knowledge of the "mind of Christ," which is a full and clear representation to us of the mind of the Father. We are to grow in this knowledge by studying the Word of God, by discerning through that Word the principles which govern the divine conduct, as to how divine justice, wisdom, love and power operate. These are progressive studies. Something may be learned the first day of our Christian experience, but the end of the first year should show considerable progress in the knowledge of the divine mind; the second year should show us a still further increase, and so on.

As our *intimate* knowledge of the divine plan and character increases, so must also our grace increase; for those who do not attempt to come into harmony, step by step, with that which they see of the divine character will soon lose interest in such knowledge, while those who have the interest which leads to further and further study must of necessity be growing in grace continually. And as they grow in grace, so also will they grow in peace; for peace also is a progressive thing. We had peace when first we found the Lord and realized the forgiveness of our sins; but those who have made progress in the knowledge of the divine plan and character have found their peace to be an ever-increasing one; and those who have advanced some distance in the good way can speak of it in the language of the apostles and realize it in their hearts as being "the peace of God which passeth all understanding."

The Apostle, continuing, assures us that through this knowledge of God is imparted to us as by divine power "*all things that pertain unto life and godliness.*" What an assurance! This statement of the importance of knowledge for our Christian development in every direction reminds us of the words of our Lord, "This is life eternal; that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." (John 17:3) To *know God*, as the Apostle here explains, signifies an *intimate acquaintance* with "him that hath called us by his own glory and virtue." It is only as we realize something of the greatness and perfection of the divine character that we are properly able to estimate our own littleness and imperfection; only as we see the beauties of his gracious character can we become intimately acquainted with God, familiar with his graces and virtues. The influence of this knowledge and fellowship with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, reäcts upon our own hearts, and has a cleansing and sanctifying effect. Thus the Apostle prays for some that they might grow in the knowledge of God so as to be able to "comprehend with all saints what is the length and the breadth, the depth and the height of the love of Christ which passeth [human] understanding." (Eph. 3:14-19) Those beholding the divine character, even though but dimly, as through a glass, are thereby changed from glory to glory as by the spirit of the Lord.—2 Cor. 3:18.

The thought here brought to our attention is well illustrated in the modern art of photography. In photography there is necessary first of all a sensitized plate upon which the picture is to be reflected. Not any or every plate will serve such a purpose, but only one which has been specially prepared. This corresponds to the preparation of our hearts through repentance and justifying faith toward God through our Lord Jesus Christ. This first step is necessary before we can receive upon our hearts the impress of the divine character, its glory and virtue or strength. The second step is to bring the sensitized plate into good range with the features which are to be impictured upon it. This represents the proper attitude of heart; *viz.*, full consecration to the Lord, and a desire to have his will to be our will and to have his character represented in our lives. The third step is the removal of all obscurity, all darkness, allowing the light to shine fully in upon the features to be copied. This finds its counterpart in the knowledge of God, which, as the light of truth scatters the darkness of error and sin and gives us clearer views of the divine character, and thus permits it to impress our prepared hearts and to stamp thereon his glorious character-likeness. Fourth, the sensitized plate must then be subjected to acids in order to the clearer development of the likeness. This also finds its correspondence; for our hearts, after we have gotten a clear view of the Lord, and been freely impressed with the glories of his character, require nevertheless the "fiery trials" of life, which, like the acid, only tend to develop the likeness the more perfectly. Fifth (for the correspondence continues), it is a well known fact that although photographs may be taken without the use of the precious metals, gold and silver, yet only when these are used will the photograph retain its color without fading. As heretofore seen, gold represents the divine nature, and silver represents the truth; and only in proportion as the likeness of our Lord is *fixed* in our hearts upon the basis of the truth and the divine nature can a lasting likeness be hoped for.—Rom. 8:29.

The world in general, of course, "knows not God," and very evidently the great mass of professing believers know very little about him. The Apostle Paul explains, that Satan, "the god of this world," is particularly interested in hindering any from obtaining the light upon the Lord's character and plan necessary to impicture it upon their hearts. He declares, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the glorious light of the gospel of Christ (who is the image of God) should shine unto them." (2 Cor. 4:4) Here we see the constant and irrepressible conflict—the battle of darkness against the light, as our Lord explained it in his day, saying, "The darkness hateth the light, neither cometh to the light." But all who receive and rejoice in and obey the light are the "children of the light;" and after the image of the Lord has been impressed upon their hearts, such become light-bearers to others and so shine forth upon all with whom they come in contact, reflecting the light which is shining upon them from the divine source unseen and unappreciated by the world.

At present the influence of these lights is but small in comparison with what it will be hereafter. Now, the Lord's people are like lights set upon a hill which cannot be hid, and yet their influence upon the world is comparatively small.

for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Another is, "To him that overcometh I will give power over the nations"—authority, dominion as "kings and priests unto God" to "reign on the earth." Another is that these kings and priests will reign to bless, as it is written, "In thy Seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Another promise is that Israel according to the flesh shall yet obtain mercy and blessing through the mercy of these things and priests of the Gospel age.—Rom. 11:32.

Finally, all of these exceeding great and precious promises are summed up by the Apostle in his declaration that, through this knowledge of God and through the influence of these precious promises, it is God's will that we who by nature were children of wrath even as others "might become *partakers of the divine nature.*" Oh, what a rich promise is here! How exceedingly great and precious! Who could have thought such a thing? Our highest thought might possibly have been perfection of the human nature, the earthly image of God, or perhaps, as some have sung, we might want to be angels and with the angels stand. But although angelic nature is higher than human nature, our God has not been content with offering to the "elect" church angelic nature, but in the riches of his grace and wonderful provision he has far outdone the highest flight of human fancy and has promised that the overcoming church, the "little flock," to whom it is his good pleasure to give the kingdom, the bride, the Lamb's wife, shall be exalted to share the *divine glory and divine nature of her Lord*, as well as to share his heavenly kingdom.

Such knowledge is too wonderful for us: we cannot comprehend why our great Creator should exalt to his own nature such poor, helpless creatures of the dust as we by nature are. But this and all the other gracious promises exhibit to us more and more the heights and depths, the lengths and breadths, of the love of our God, which surpasses human knowledge.

In view of what we already know of our Creator, especially as revealed to us in and through our Lord and Redeemer, Jesus, shall we not, as those who have come to see something of his glorious character, "press toward the mark" (Phil. 3:14) for the attainment of all that he may be pleased to reveal to us concerning himself, that thus we may be more and more partakers of his spirit, more and more conformed to his likeness, more and more acceptable, and by and by be actually and everlastingly accepted in the Beloved, to the full realization of all those blessings which God has in reservation for them who love him, and of which now we have the exceeding great and precious promises?

Such promises and such knowledge properly inspire our hearts to love, obedience and self-sacrifice, that we may please him who has called us to his own nature and fellowship; and, as the Apostle says, "He who hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he [the Lord] is pure."

It was to this intimate knowledge of or acquaintance with the Lord and its reward that the Apostle Paul referred, saying,—"That I might *know him* and [experience] the power of *his resurrection* [the first or chief resurrection, by] being made [fully] conformable unto his death [—which full surrender is possible to those only who *know him* well and have drunk in his spirit]."—Phil. 3:10.

It is still true of the body of Christ as it was true of the Head, "The light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." But of the by and by it is written, "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father;" "The Sun of righteousness shall arise with healing in his beams." This will be the great Millennial day; and as a result of the shining forth of the elect church, we are assured that all darkness will disappear and the light of "the knowledge of the Lord shall fill the whole earth."

Proceeding, the Apostle assures us that, in order to the attainment of this intimate knowledge of God which multiplies our grace and peace and gives us all things that pertain to life and godliness, God has "given unto us exceeding great and precious promises." Looking about us, we find that the majority of our fellow-Christians in the world, even of those who have the "precious faith" and trust in the "precious blood," must be "babes" in even elementary knowledge; for evidently they do not know much concerning these exceeding great and precious promises. If we would inquire of them with reference to these promises, the vast majority would answer—We shall escape eternal torment and get to heaven. And many would add, If I can get just inside the door of heaven, it will be all I could ask or hope for.

What? Do they know *nothing* of the "exceeding great and precious promises" mentioned by the Apostle? Alas! apparently very little. But what are these promises, and who have knowledge of them?

Only those who are following in the pathway which the Apostle here marks out; who multiply their grace and peace, though an ever-increasing, intimate knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord,—those who are seeing more and more clearly the divine character and plan, and whose hearts are in a susceptible and impressionable attitude, and upon which is being *fixed* more and more distinctly the image of God's dear Son, who is the express image of the Father. (Rom. 8:29) Before these, shining out as helps by the way, in letters of light, are the "exceeding great and precious promises" of God's Word, which to other hearts are unilluminated, dark and almost meaningless.

Which and what are these promises?

Oh, they are so many and so precious that it is difficult to know which would rank first. Perhaps first of all is the precious promise, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be *like him*, for we shall *see him as he is.*" Another is, "If I go away, I will come again, and receive you unto myself;" in harmony with which is the prayer, "Father, I will that these may be *with me*, where I am, that they may behold my glory." Another is, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Another is, "They shall be mine . . . . in that day when I make up my jewels." Another is, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Another is, that we are "Heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Another is, that we are "*Begotten again* to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven

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THE BLESSED PEOPLE OF GOD

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."—Matt. 5:3.

It is only when, as faithful and obedient children of God, we reverently turn the sacred pages of his holy Word and read them as a loving epistle from our faithful God, full of wisdom and counsel and wholesome instruction, that we gather from it all the refreshment of divine grace contained in it. Thus, for instance, in the first lines of our Lord's sermon on the mount, heavenly love breaks forth in showers of blessing—"Blessed," "blessed," "blessed are ye!" Who are the blessed ones thus addressed? Are they the holy angels who do always behold the Father's face? Truly they are blessed; but these words were not addressed to them, but to the redeemed sons of men—to men rescued from the fall, whose feet were taken out of the miry clay and set upon a rock, and in whose mouth is put the new song of praise and thanksgiving for redeeming love and grace.

"Blessed are ye!" Do the blessings belong to all who have ever to any extent tasted of the favor of God? Do they belong to the pardoned sinners who, after being pardoned and cleansed, like the nine lepers of whom the Lord spoke, returned not again to give God the glory? Do they belong to those who do not follow on to know the Lord,—who decline to be led of his spirit while they continue to partake of the spirit of the world? Do they belong to the proud and lofty-spirited ones, to those at ease in Zion, to the self-satisfied, the selfish, or those who in any form regard iniquity in their hearts? Ah, no! Any such who read these lines must read therein their own condemnation; for, while they are benedictions to the faithful, they are also solemn warnings to the unfaithful. The benedictions are for the poor in spirit; for those who mourn because iniquity abounds; for the meek (the teachable and humble); for those who hunger and thirst after righteousness; for the merciful; for the pure in heart, the peacemakers, and the reviled and persecuted for righteousness' sake; for those whom the Lord calls "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world." Blessed, yes, blessed are ye of the Lord of hosts! Yours is the kingdom of heaven; you shall inherit the earth; you shall be comforted; you shall be filled with the Spirit of God; you shall obtain mercy; you shall see God, and shall be called the children of God; your reward in heaven is great; you shall by and by be as a city set on a hill that cannot be hid. "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad;" for these heavenly benedictions are upon *your* heads.

The result is inharmony with the general spirit of this present evil world. And together with the heavenly desires and aspirations there must be a meek and contrite spirit—a pliable, teachable disposition. "Blessed are the poor in spirit" —the lowly in mind, the studious, teachable ones. Such the Lord can and will lead by his spirit into the paths of righteousness, and finally into the glory of his kingdom:—"Theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

O that our dull souls may awake more fully to all that is implied in this promise of the kingdom! Let us meditate upon it more and more, until the glorious hope inspires to faithful endurance of hardness under all circumstances as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. How large a place did the things pertaining to the kingdom of God occupy in the preaching of Jesus and the apostles! Indeed, the whole message of divine inspiration contained in the New Testament was briefly comprehended in that expression of our Lord—"This Gospel of the kingdom." The entire work of this Gospel age was to be the preaching of this kingdom,—"This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world, for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end [the harvest of the age] come." (Matt. 24:14) This gospel—this good news—of the coming kingdom of God, with all that pertains to it, was the constant theme of the Lord and the apostles:—"Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom." And he commissioned his disciples, saying, "As ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."—Matt. 10:7.

We read nothing in the New Testament of any departure on the part of the early disciples from this blessed theme of the gospel of the kingdom to the preaching of a mere lifeless morality, or of politics, or of any other theme; but the prospective kingdom of God, its sure foundation in Christ the Redeemer, its universal dominion, its unlimited authority, its righteous character and requirements, the holiness that alone can inherit or enter into it, and the glory and blessedness to come in it and through it, were constantly held before the people to the exclusion of all side issues.

This is the kingdom to be inherited by the poor in spirit; for only the poor in spirit—the humble, teachable ones—can submit to the discipline and training necessary to fit them for it. The heady, the high-minded, the proud, the self-conscious and self-righteous have no promise of the kingdom, and cannot inherit it, nor enter into it; for "there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth." (Rev. 21:27) So, altho in the present age many of these are esteemed of men as the aristocracy of the earth, they will not be the aristocracy of the new dispensation; but the poor in spirit will reign with Christ for the blessing of all the families of the earth. And even now, in God's estimation, these constitute the embryo kingdom, and God is in the midst of them, and his law is established in their hearts. "The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." "Tho the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly; but the proud he knoweth afar off." "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy: I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house [the temple] that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest? . . . . but upon such a one will I look, upon the poor, and him who is of a contrite spirit, and who trembleth at my word."—Psa. 34:18; 138:6; Isa. 57:15; 66:1, 2.

This is the kingdom class, the temple class, the beloved of the Lord with whom he is pleased to dwell. Like this Master, they are often lightly esteemed among men of the world, and perhaps despised among the multitudes who professedly are the Lord's people, but whose hearts and minds are still engrossed with worldly things; but they are the prospective kings and priests of the new dispensation, and their lowly estate in the present life is only their necessary discipline to fit them for the glory and service of the time to come. These are the living stones now being shaped, chiseled and polished for their places in the glorious temple of God, the house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Blessed indeed are the poor in spirit with such a heritage! M. F. Russell.

PETER DELIVERED FROM PRISON

April 25.—Acts 12:5-17.

"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."—Psa. 34:7.

Following the history of the early church, we now come upon another period of persecution. The former persecution seems to have passed by the principal ones of the church entirely. It manifested itself against ordinary believers rather than against the apostles and public ministers. The result, as we have seen, was the spread of the Gospel by those who were "scattered abroad everywhere." The persecution now considered was directed against the apostles. Both persecutions were from the adversary and his faithful, but were such only as God saw best to permit, and such as would work out some good in connection with his plan.

During the reign of the Roman Emperor Caligula the Jews were kept in a considerable ferment by reason of his repeated attempt to have his statue set up in the temple, with altars for the worship of himself. While the Jews were so busy in defending their own religious liberties, the infant Christian church was left comparatively unmolested; but now Caligula was dead, and a very different personage was his successor, and the Jews having a respite from troubles of their own, had good opportunity to cultivate their animosity against the followers of the Nazarene. King Herod Agrippa, having been obliged to coöperate with the Emperor's plans, had made himself more or less obnoxious to his subjects, the Jews, and he now sought to conciliate them, by persecuting the Christians. This Herod Agrippa was a worthy successor to his uncle, who had murdered John the Baptist, and to his grandfather, Herod the Great, who murdered the infants at Bethlehem. His first object was personal aggrandisement and the perpetuation of his own family in the kingdom. His public acts, on the one hand, were intended to continue him in favor with the Emperor at Rome, and on the other hand, to gain as much favor as possible from the people whom he ruled as king—as representative of the Emperor.

The persecution began with the killing of the Apostle James. Seeing that thereby he gained the favor of the Jews, Herod thought it the cheapest method by which to regain popularity with his subjects and proceded to take Peter also. What a sad blow this must have been to the early church! James and Peter were apparently the principal leaders in the affairs of the church at Jerusalem, as they two with John, the brother of James, were the most prominent amongst the apostles while our Lord lived. We can imagine the consternation—James already dead, Peter seized and imprisoned and his execution held over merely because it was the week of Passover, and because according to Jewish custom no one could be put to death during that week. The manifest, if not declared, intention of Herod was that Peter should be killed in some manner immediately after the close of the Passover week. Here we pause to notice a strange commingling of religious formalism with the spirit of murder: the spirit of murder was in Herod and in the Jews, yet both for the time restrained themselves in order to symbolize by the Passover ceremonial a cleansing of the heart and life, a purification toward God. There is a lesson here (for all who will take it) to be on guard lest the outward and formal observances be an utter contradiction of the real condition of the heart. While obedience to the Lord in outward observances is eminently proper, it is still more important that the thoughts be pure and good.

By this time the number of Christians in Jerusalem was evidently considerable, notwithstanding the number that had emigrated on account of persecution: and it does not at all surprise us that we are informed that these everywhere were praying to God on Peter's behalf. There were evidently no church buildings in use by the Christians up to this time: they gathered in convenient places, and quite probably there were several of these in Jerusalem. The earnestness of these prayers is evidenced by the fact that they were kept up *all night*, and evidently for the *entire week* of Peter's imprisonment; for he was not delivered until the very last night, and, when delivered, it was some time in the "fourth watch," which began at three o'clock in the morning, and he was knocking at the "gate" of Mary's home, where prayer was being made, before sunrise.—Verse 13.

We cannot know just why the Lord permitted the death

of James and spared the life of Peter; yet, doubtless, both events exercised a beneficial influence upon the church. Possibly, indeed, there may have been growing in the church a lack of appreciation of these apostles whom the Lord had so highly honored as his mouthpieces and channels for blessing the church. The martyrdom of one would cause his loss to be seriously realized, the imprisonment of the other would and did draw forth the sympathy, love and appreciation of the whole company; and after they had prayed so earnestly for his deliverance, we may be sure that Peter was more than ever beloved by the Lord's flock. At all events, the death of one and the sparing of the other, we may be sure, were parts of the all things that worked together for good to those who loved the Lord.

Meantime, Peter had been delivered to four quaternions of soldiers (*i. e.*, four relief guards of four soldiers each): two of these watched in the outer courts of the prison, while two of them were chained to Peter in the cell. Thus, seemingly, every precaution had been taken against his escape. He had been delivered once before from the prison into which he had been thrust by the Sanhedrin, but now he was under military guard, probably in the Tower of Antonio, and chained to soldiers who knew that under Roman usage his escape would mean their death. The entire week had been spent in prayer on his behalf, yet the Lord had not delivered him, and each day seemed to add to the earnestness of the prayers, and to the necessity for the deliverance; yet knowing the circumstance it was difficult to judge in which way the Lord's providence would be interposed on Peter's behalf, if at all. Since the Lord had seen best to permit the death of James, they must have reasoned that they could not be at all certain that Peter would be delivered from death. How great and how far-reaching were the blessings of that week of trial and of power, of drawing near to the Lord and of realization of complete dependence upon him, we may surmise. The Lord was pleased in his providence to spare Peter to the church, but he was also evidently pleased to be inquired of by the church on this subject.

PETER ANXIOUS FOR NOTHING

However, even on the last night of his imprisonment, though he expected that the next morning Herod would call for him to deliver him up to death, notwithstanding all this, "Peter slept." His noble, courageous heart was fixed upon the Lord, he trusted in divine wisdom and divine power and divine love, and was assured that nothing would be permitted to happen that would not be in some manner overruled for good. Hence, committing his all to the Lord, he was able to rest sweetly in sleep. Here was the appropriate order of things: the one directly involved so sweetly resting in the Lord's grace and love that he was free from trouble and fear, while the church in general, though not so directly and personally concerned, were so full of loving interest on behalf of a brother that they prayed without ceasing day and night on his behalf. What they asked we are not told, but what they should ask under such circumstances we may well know from our Lord's own prayer (Matt. 26:39-42): whatever they asked, in propriety must have included the thought and the expression—Thy will, not ours, O Lord, be done.

When the angel awakened Peter, loosed his fetters, opened the strongly barred gates of the prison and brought him forth into the street, he left him, having accomplished his mission. Peter, amazed and bewildered, could scarcely realize at first whether it was a reality or a vision; but as he got his senses collected he comprehended that God had wrought for him another wonderful deliverance from the hands of his enemies—Herod and the Jews. But he neither went back to taunt the soldiers, nor was he filled with self-admiration and self-confidence, so as to shout his deliverance on the way; but considering the matter carefully he concluded that his proper course would be flight to some other city, as the Lord had directed, saying, "When they shall persecute you in one city flee to another." But as a true under-shepherd he had too deep an interest in the Lord's people who were so earnestly praying for him, to leave them without some explanation: so, going to the house of one of the friends of the cause, he communicated to them the fact of his release, sent word to the leaders of the cause in the city—"James and the brethren"—and then fled to another place. This James was the brother of our Lord, while the James who had been killed was the Apostle, the brother of John. The fact that James and the prominent brethren were not at the house of Mary and her son John-Mark would seem to corroborate the thought that the meeting at the latter place was only one of many in Jerusalem.

The narrative of Peter's knocking at the door and the interruption of the prayer meeting, with the announcement of the answer of the prayers in a most remarkable manner, is all told with a beautiful simplicity, and indicates to us the loving spirit of fellowship and brotherhood which existed in the early church.

MINISTERING SPIRITS UNTO THE SAINTS

The Golden Text carries a great lesson of its own in connection with Peter's deliverance. The Scriptures give us clearly to understand that the angels of God are "ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." (Heb. 1:14) Very seldom have they been manifested to any as in this recorded instance; yet they are present as the representatives of the Lord to do any needed work for us according to his will. But we are to understand that the angel of the Lord was with James who was killed, as truly as with Peter who was delivered; and that the deliverance of God's people is not always such as can be appreciated by the natural senses. Sometimes the angel of the Lord is present with us and grants sustaining strength to endure a trial from which we are not delivered. Such was our Lord's case: we read that an angel appeared unto him and strengthened him. Such was probably the ministration of angels to James in his time of sore distress, when his life was yielded up to a murderer. Such also have been the experiences of many: the angel of the Lord has stood with them and has strengthened where he was not authorized to deliver. It is recorded that many Christian martyrs were so upheld and blessed, that even in the midst of persecution, torture and flames, they were able to sing praises to the Lord. It is related of Bishop Latimer that when bound to the stake he said to Bishop Ridley, speaking with great equanimity respecting his own suffering, "We shall light such a candle, by God's grace, in England this day, as I trust shall never be put out again."

How it enlarges the confidence of a Christian to realize that whilst earthly powers may be in opposition, and whilst he may be really of himself powerless to resist adversaries, and whilst in addition to the flesh and blood adversaries he may realize that he battles also with spiritual wickedness in exalted places—against Satan and his minions of darkness—yet that, on the other hand, "greater is he that is on our part than all that be against us," and that all the heavenly hosts are subject to the divine will and may be employed for the advancement of the divine cause according to divine wisdom.

PAUL'S FIRST MISSIONARY TOUR

MAY 2.—Acts 13:1-13.

With this lesson we leave the parent church at Jerusalem, and the later church at Antioch, and start with the Apostle Paul upon what is termed the first missionary tour. Really, however, nearly all of the work thus far done might be said to be of the nature of missionary work. Our Lord's work amongst the Jews was in the nature of a missionary work. The work which began with the day of Pentecost amongst the Jews was in the nature of missionary work. The work done by those who were scattered abroad as the result of persecution in Judea was in the nature of missionary work. The church at Antioch was itself a mission church. And so the missionary journey of the Apostle Paul should not be considered in the light of *special* mission work, as that term is used today (not a mission to savages and barbarians), but rather as a part of the whole work, which the Lord was pleased to specially bless and use in the establishment of the truth in various quarters distant from Jerusalem.

In a previous lesson we saw the progress made by the Christians at Antioch under the instruction of the holy Spirit through Barnabas and Paul. And this is corroborated by the testimony of this lesson that the church at Antioch was in a healthful condition, spiritual and full of zeal for the spread of the Gospel. It had in it by this time several persons of ability and full consecration whom the Lord was pleased to use in connection with its ministry; and the time had come when Paul and Barnabas could be spared to go elsewhere,; to start others in the good way; and the holy Spirit indicated that this should be done. How this was indicated we are not informed, and we will not speculate concerning it. Suffice it that the church understood the directions of the

holy Spirit and obeyed them, Barnabas and Paul being agreeable also. Barnabas is mentioned first in the record because up to this time he had the more prominent position, as being older than Paul in spiritual things and perhaps also older in years. While Paul was "a chosen vessel" unto the Lord, prepared for a great service, it had not yet been fully manifest that he was the Lord's choice to fill the place of Judas, the *twelfth apostle.*

Apparently Barnabas and Paul were sent forth at the expense or charges of the church at Antioch, and hence went forth as their representatives, as well as representatives of the Lord. The importance of the matter was appreciated, and the dependence of the mission upon divine blessing was recognized in the fasting and prayer and outward manifestation of appointment by laying on of hands. This laying on of hands was not by way of giving *authority* to preach, for Barnabas and Paul had already been teaching in various quarters for some years, and had been teaching the church at Antioch for over a year: it was therefore merely a ceremony by which the missionaries and the church undertaking their support took cognizance of each other as representatives and represented in this special work about to be begun. But while accepting the commission of the Antioch church, as its representatives, the missionaries specially recognized that they were sent forth by the holy Spirit.—Verse 4.

They had not gone far before they began the work which lay so near to their hearts;—the preaching of God's message, of good tidings of great joy, of reconciliation effected by the precious blood of Christ. They did not go to heathen people, but went to sow the seed of the kingdom in already prepared soil: they went, first of all, as in every place, to the Jews who for sixteen hundred years had been under the law as a school-master to prepare them to receive Christ. The pious Gentiles who were "feeling after God, if haply they might find him," and who had some knowledge of the God of Israel, frequently attended these Jewish synagogues, and hence in going to these the missionaries, Barnabas and Paul, were reaching the best prepared and most religious element in every place.

The liberality of the management of the Jewish synagogues is attested by the fact that the Gospel got a ready hearing in all of them up to the point where they realized that the message was likely to produce a division in their midst. If the Jewish synagogues and Christian churches today were conducted on a similarly liberal basis, and gave opportunity for the presentation of any subject that could be presented from the Scriptures and in harmony with the Scriptures, the present missionary work of disseminating the present harvest truth would be very much simplified. While today we are less subject to the violent persecution, on the other hand we are seriously handicapped by prevailing conditions and sectarian bondage.

John-Mark, the nephew of Barnabas, is here introduced to us; not as a third laborer in the special work of ministry of the truth, but as an assistant or servant to Barnabas and Paul. In this as in every place the Scriptures, while teaching that all believers are "brethren" and "fellow-heirs," nevertheless repudiate entirely the thought entertained by some today that all brethren are exactly on an equality in every matter. Very properly Mark did not say—"If I cannot go on an equality with Barnabas and Paul, I will not go at all." Very properly he did say that if there is any opportunity for service, if by any means I can render any assistance in the journey and affairs of these whom the holy Spirit has indicated as special representatives, I shall be most glad to serve them, and thus serve indirectly the Lord and his cause. And there were opportunities, as there are always opportunities for those who have a will to serve the cause; and no doubt Barnabas, and especially Paul, received many helps from their younger brother who had become their servant chiefly from his desire to serve the cause of Christ. No doubt also their opportunities for public ministry of the truth were enlarged and broadened by his helpful assistance in secular affairs. Paul especially constantly needed a helper, because of his thorn in the flesh, his weak eyes.

Mark's faithful service continued for some time, but for some reason (verse 13) not stated he left the work, and we may judge very nearly lost his privilege and opportunity in connection with it. No one knows how much he may have lost of spiritual blessing and privilege by his failure to continue with Paul. The disagreement, whatever it may have been, apparently extended to his uncle Barnabas, and eventually led to the separation of the latter from Paul. However, years afterward John-Mark apparently saw things in a different light, and again joined Paul's company. He seems to have ultimately become a true yoke-fellow, very highly appreciated by the great Apostle. (Col. 4:10; 2 Tim. 4:11) Here is a suggestion to all of us that, no matter what may be the door of opportunity for engaging in the Lord's service, faithfulness to it is essential to progress; and there is a further lesson that if we find that we have erred and been unappreciative of our privilege the best thing to do is to repent therefor and seek a renewal of the opportunities, and to attest our loyalty by fresh and increased earnestness.

The Gospel heralds continued on their journey through the Island of Cyprus, until at Paphos they came in contact with a new experience. There Satan has a special servant, a spirit-medium, a sorcerer, and false teacher. This man had ingratiated himself with the chief government official of that place, and when the latter was being reached by the Gospel message the sorcerer opposed it, realizing that there can be no harmony between light and darkness, between the Spirit of Christ and the spirit of demons, and that if the deputy governor became a follower of Christ and imbued with his Spirit, he would be proportionately out of harmony with spirit mediumship and sorcery and all the evil works of the flesh and the devil. It was a peculiar case, such as apparently had not previously been presented; it was a contention between truth and error and the servant of truth and the servant of error. It was just such a case as was needed to bring forward the Apostle Paul's grand traits of character: opposition only made him the stronger by arousing him fully to the necessity of the case. More than this, although he had already been made the recipient of certain "gifts" of the holy Spirit, he was now specially imbued with divine power, as is here indicated by the Greek text; and acting under the direction of this holy power which possessed him, he pronounced against Elymas the scathing rebuke and sentence of blindness, which we have recorded in this week's lesson.

The deputy, who was evidently honest-hearted and sincere in his desire to know the truth, was thus convinced of the truth, and embraced the Gospel. From this time onward Paul takes his place as the chief one in the work: hereafter it is Paul and Barnabas or Paul and his company. It is quite probable that it was a failure to recognize the Lord's leading in connection with the Apostle Paul and his leadership as an *apostle* of this branch of the work, and through family sympathy with his uncle Barnabas, that John Mark here deserted the work.

The spiritual lesson here, for us all, is (1) that the Lord himself is at the helm and directing his work, and that each and all of us should continually look to him for the guidance of his work and to note how he is leading the various members in the body (1 Cor. 12:25-31); (2) the lesson teaches us the Lord's will respecting the promulgation of the Gospel; for altho unfortunately the Golden Text chosen is spurious—not found in old manuscripts (Mark 16:9 to end, being omitted by all old manuscripts—See also Revised Version),—nevertheless, the same thought, that it is the will of God that the Gospel should be preached everywhere, is abundantly taught in other places (Matt. 28:19) and enforced by this very lesson under consideration. We see from it, too, that while certain servants are chosen and indicated by the Lord for certain special services, yet others are permitted to serve as did Mark, and still others may serve the church at home, as did Simeon and Lucius and Manaën, and that still others—the entire church—are privileged to co-operate in the matter of sympathy, love, prayers, hospitality and financial sustenance.—Rom. 12:6-13.

Circumstances have since greatly changed, and we are not to be confined to exactly the same methods of procedure now as then; but the inherent principles are the same. We neither wear the same kind of clothing, nor travel in the same kind of vessels, nor are we supported in exactly the same manner. But with all of these variances the same service is now due to be performed; namely, the preaching of the gospel to all who have "ears to hear." With the Gospel presented on the printed page, and with present mail and rail facilities, a very much larger number may become public missionaries, going from place to place, holding up the lamp of life, carrying the good tidings from door to door. The same agencies make it possible for those who must remain at home and who can use the mails to thus go about doing good, preaching Christ and his kingdom and its righteousness. Others in turn can go about preaching orally as well as circulating the printed page—"every man according to his several ability." (Matt. 25:15) We who are living today have special opportunities and privileges for ministering the truth to others. Our responsibility is correspondingly large, and our faith and love and zeal should be correspondingly shown; for he who loves much and who has many opportunities will surely do much for him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

District of Columbia.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I have just received a letter from our beloved Brother Lundy, in which he tells me that you are preparing a tract for the Hebrews. I am so delighted over the news that I cannot keep myself from writing a few words. May the Lord bless you and develop in you a true, sincere and earnest love to his people which he formed for himself to show forth his praise (Isa. 42), and who through the erroneous teachings of the apostate church were led to believe that Christianity is only another form of idolatry, and blasphemed and rejected the "only name given among men whereby we must be saved," and the great blessings of the gospel.

Tell my dear brethren boldly and lovingly of the true Christian creed: We trust in the living God, who is the saviour of all men, especially of those who believe (1 Tim. 4:10); that "By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities" (Isa. 53:11); that we Christians do not make the law of God void, but establish the law (Rom. 3:31); and that The letter killeth, but the spirit quickeneth.

Yours in the love of the Lord and his people.

CHAS. S. LABOFISH.

Ontario.

DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER RUSSELL:—I have been intending for some time to write you, but hitherto have had nothing new to add to the same old story of the amazing love of God for man. I am still holding on the same place of anchor—the ransom for all, the rock Christ Jesus. For the past six years I thought, like Elijah of old, that I was the only one in this place that cared for God, and that (typically speaking) many were seeking my life; but the good Lord has shown me that I was mistaken. During last Summer Brother Wiltze moved to this town, and we at once met regularly for communion and study. Through him I learned that one of the members of the official board of the Methodist church with me when I resigned from the board and withdrew from the church was now reading DAWN and quite interested in its teaching. This brother had the DAWN at the time I left the church, but on the advice of the Minister he laid it away as a dangerous book. I called to see him and found both him and his wife much interested. After that they met with Bro. Wiltze and myself until they removed to near Boston, and I am informed that they meet regularly with the brethren in Boston. This greatly encouraged us to persevere in the work.

Two weeks ago I stepped into the butcher shop of a stranger to me to purchase a piece of meat, and while getting it ready he asked me if my name was Anger. I said, yes. He said he had heard of me as a reader of MILLENNIAL DAWN and that he had also been reading it. I asked, How do you like its teachings? His reply was that it was the only satisfying explanation of the Bible and the plan of salvation. His wife came in, and I was introduced to her. She was very enthusiastic, and I learned from her that her father had been a reader and believer of DAWN and its teachings for eight years, that her brother and sister and others of the family were also believers. On my way home I called upon her father and found him strong in the faith, and another daughter as enthusiastic as the father. After exchanging views for some time I invited them to come to our meetings at my house, and the next afternoon the daughter and her husband came out and we had a profitable time. I should have mentioned that before I knew of these brothers and sisters a son of the brother above mentioned had also become a believer, and was meeting regularly with us and is making rapid progress in the truth.

One week ago today our little company numbered eleven, all but three of whom I believe are true believers, and the others not real opposers. Today there were only five present, but one of them was a new convert to the old Gospel. And so the Lord is leading and we are rejoicing and beginning to understand why he has prevented us from closing up our affairs in this town in order to get out of it over a year ago. Some time ago we came to the conclusion that the Lord had a work for us to do here, but we could see no opening, for the ministers had effectually closed the door against us by warning their people to avoid us as dangerous persons to talk to on religious subjects, as hot-headed persons, religious cranks and disbelievers in God's Word. When these things came to us, we rejoiced that we were accounted worthy to suffer with Jesus, for in his day he was regarded very much the same by the religious people of that time. "Blessed are ye, when men shall speak all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." (Matt. 5:11) But none of these things move us, for we know in whom we have believed, and that he is more than all they who are against us.

It is a strange thing that our opposers do not try to show wherein we have retrograded in life and action, but put forth all their efforts to show what a fearful thing it is to leave the church. To leave the church is a sure passport to perdition, and a man must be bad when he leaves the church, altho he neither swears, deals falsely with his neighbors or in any way deviates from the best standard of correct living, but on the other hand has an increased love for and faith in God's Word, diligently studies it to find out God's perfect will and earnestly strives daily to bring his life and conduct to harmonize with that Word. Yet herein is the evidence that human nature is still the same, perverted and unregenerated and far below the standard of perfect human nature.

What a glorious reality is the religion of Jesus Christ!—glorious in its contemplation, glorious in its possession, glorious when we can get but one to espouse it, yet more glorious in its after-fruits, when we (the church) shall have the privilege of instructing, guiding, controling and leading our friends (now enemies) back to righteousness and to God during the space of a thousand years. We are content to do the Master's will in any way it may be required, and are rejoicing at the prospect of the progress of truth, and if need be are willing to suffer for it. May God keep us humble, willing and obedient.

Your brother in Christ, an ardent follower of the Lamb,

J. E. ANGER.

Texas.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—It has been a long time since I wrote to you, tho I have often thought of doing so. I was indeed pleased to learn of the opportune and powerful support received by the Society, and that it will be well spent is a foregone conclusion with me. In the TOWER you strike the keynote; you are building on the Rock, "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." How easy and natural for our poor race to err now! Thank God, most of them know not what they do! In Feb. 15 issue you make so clear the flood that is sweeping away what little faith nominal Christians have. It illustrates, "Take away from him that hath not, and give to him that hath;" or, as expressed in Luke 8:18, margin, "even that he thinketh that he hath."

I want to call your attention to the last chapter of Micah, and invite your criticism on my applications. [We think the suggestions are good.—EDITOR.] Verse 1 seems to apply to the true church; vs. 3 is a picture of the present unbearable corruption in governments and the operation of trusts; vs. 4 refers to the nominal church; verses 5 and 6 are addressed to the "little flock," as in Luke 21:16; vs. 7 is uttered by them, as is vs. 8. And here is where it seems to me a partial darkness and confusion comes over them, so that she that is the enemy could bring a reproach. I would also like you to notice vs. 15—the going out of Egypt as a type of entering the Millennium.

Your brother in the faith,

E. C. LEIGH.

Iowa.

DEAR FRIENDS IN CHRIST:—Received the books with thanks, and the brother is earnestly seeking the truth. Please send me a few more tracts. It does me good to find one who will receive the truth, and I praise the dear Lord for allowing me that privilege of service.

I think sometimes it is because I am so unworthy that the Lord don't use me more. In my early life I lived a devoted Christian for some years, then there came a time when I was measurably thrown out of Christian society, and I became cold, neglected duty and was what is called a "backslider," tho I never felt like denying the Lord who redeemed me. But seven years since, through the providence of our dear Lord, a brother handed me the DAWN to read, and it awakened me to greater love than I ever enjoyed before. Since that time I have tried in my weak way and through much affliction to do what I could. I fear I lost my place in the bride company when living away from Christ; but, if I did, I will continue to serve him to the best of my knowledge. His service is all-glorious to me, and I will be his in some capacity. Please tell me briefly what you think of me. I study the Word all that I am able, and try to do all the good I can.

With much love to all the saints, I remain, your sister in Christ,

M. C. ————

[REPLY:—Yours is at hand, and we are glad to hear from you again. Have sent the tracts requested, and rejoice with you that it has been your privilege to find at least one eager for the truth.

You ask what we think of your case. From what you say

of your Christian experience and the present attitude of your heart, we should say, "Cast not away your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward, for ye have need of patience that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." (Heb. 10:33-37) The Apostle calls attention to some who were not able to go out in the midst of the battle as he was, but were loyal to the truth and rejoiced in the privilege of being the *companions* of some who were so used. And this, dear sister, has certainly been your case since you have come to a knowledge of the present truth. You have not lacked in sympathy for all the other members of the body, esteeming it a privilege to suffer *with* them if you could not do so *for* them. And as in David's day those who remained with the stuff received equal share of the spoils with those who went to battle, so we believe that you and all of like experience will receive a share in the glories to come.

That during a considerable portion of your life you were in a backslidden condition is to be regretted; but the fact that the Lord sent you the truth was a distinct evidence of his love for you, and that you had not fallen away beyond recovery. We have no doubt that as you look back you will be able to recognize that much of your languor was caused by lack of knowledge of God and his Word, and consequently your mind was not sufficiently awakened to the necessity for active service; and even if you had tried to teach the truth you would have been unable to do so, because you did not have it yourself. Hence, we are sure that, if you ask it, the Lord will forgive all the shortcomings of the past; in fact, we have no doubt that you have already done so, and that he has granted full forgiveness. All who are truly seeking to do the Lord's will can doubtless look back over the past years of their life and realize that they omitted many things they might have done. If it were not so, it would prove either that they have failed to grow, and have a low standard of excellence, or that all they did was perfectly done (which of course is impossible, for there is none righteous, no, not one). Herein lies the value to us of the robe of Christ's righteousness, covering all our imperfections, so that our best endeavors may be acceptable in God's sight as tho perfect.

Therefore, dear sister, we encourage you to renew your hope and confidence; do with your might what your hands find to do; let your daily life be a witness for the Lord and an example of holiness; and, when you can do nothing more, "Stand." (See Eph. 6:10-18.—Editor.]

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VIEWS FROM THE TOWER

FEDERATION OF PROTESTANTS

In our last we called attention to the federation of the various Protestant denominations in Great Britain, aside from the church of England. The New York *Independent* noticed the matter as follows:—

"We gave account last week of the meeting of the Free Church Council in London, and we asked why such a *confederation* of the Protestant churches in this country could not be inaugurated. The subject is well worth further and frequent consideration. That meeting represented the Wesleyans, Baptists, Congregationalists, Presbyterians, indeed all the Free Churches of Great Britain with two million communicants. It was the most representative meeting of English Christians held for over three centuries; for the members of the combined Free Churches of Great Britain slightly outnumber the communicants of the established church. Separated hitherto, they now are *confederated*. They are one. They no longer suffer under the reproach of a divided church. They have declared that they believe that the church of Jesus Christ should be one, and they have made it not merely spiritually, but visibly one, so far as lies in their power. Why should British Christians be more progressive than we in America? Yet, somehow, an old and compact country like Great Britain does work out some problems faster than we do. They are in advance of us in giving popular service, postal banks and postal telegraphs; and here we find them far in advance of us in this great popular Christian movement which brings believers into public and confessed fellowship in Christ."

FEDERATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S SOCIETIES

Since (1) it is a settled fact that the young people of the various denominations will not be encouraged by their denominational "Elders" to unite as Christian Endeavors, and that such a union is feared, especially by Methodists and Presbyterians, as tending to break down and remove all denominational barriers; and since (2) denominational federation comes slower than was hoped for, it is now proposed to establish a Young People's Christian Federation. This will partially satisfy those who are clamoring for christian union without denominational restrictions; it will also fix things where they are, and make it "irregular" and "a breach of etiquette" to criticize, or attempt to supplant, any of the allied or federated societies; and it will pave the way for the desired denominational federation, which we know from the Scriptures is rapidly approaching, and will be of injury to pure, primitive Christianity, and lead quickly to church and state alliance and to the collapse of the present social order.

Asked, some time ago, how soon such a federation might be expected to take shape, we suggested that the opening of the twentieth century would be a likely date, as it is growingly the spirit of our times to start large undertakings on prominent and propitious days and years. We are therefore surprised to find the prime-movers in this federation naming a date so far in advance as the new century. This federation we should expect sooner, and the church federation by 1900, A. D. We quote the views of people prominent in these Young People's Societies.

H. K. Carroll, LL. D., who suggests this federation, and that the congress for the purpose be called for the year 1900, gives as their total membership 4,414,776. We quote from his article in the *Independent* the following expression:—

"As immediate union of all these bodies is out of the question, why should there not be an Alliance or Federation of them? They have no creeds that stand in the way of closer relations. There is no question of polity to keep them asunder. They have the same object, similar pledges, and practice methods which do not vary widely. Such a Federation could in no way injuriously affect the denominational loyalty or usefulness of any society. Neither would it interfere with denominational control and denominational development."

Bishop W. X. Ninde, of the M. E. church, president of the Epworth Board of Control, endorses Dr. Carroll's suggestion, as follows:—

"While organic union seems impossible, certainly for the time, there are no Christians in the land who feel a stronger yearning for a union of sympathy and coöperation in Christian work than do the young people represented in the Epworth League. We are fully committed to the general plan of a Federation or Alliance of Young People's societies. Our Board of Control, at its recent session in New York, emphatically reäffirmed its wish for the closest spiritual unity with all Christian young people, and its readiness to make or receive overtures for joining hands in all practical methods of Christian work."

Mr. J. W. Baer, general Secretary of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor, says:—

"The committee will welcome suggestions, and may its efforts be blessed in binding all the young people of evangelical churches into a closer spiritual fellowship that shall in no way interfere with denominational control. There is no reason why everything that is worth having in the way of denominational control of young people's societies should be maintained without sacrificing anything that is worth having of interdenominational fellowship."

J. T. Beckley, D. D., one of the trustees of the same society, says:—

"Federation is the next step forward in the Young People's movement. It is logical and providential. The uprising of the young people is the most significant fact in the history of modern Christendom—the twenty-ninth chapter of the Book of the Acts. Its import is far-reaching. It is a splendid apologetic. When the enemy was claiming that Christianity was decadent and the Bible was a last year's almanac, this army of consecrated disciples, numbered by millions, came to the front."

Rev. J. A. Duff, of the Young People's Christian Union of the United Presbyterian church, says:—

"There is a growing conviction in the minds of many that Christianity as represented by the Protestant churches—each one working in its own way without reference to the success of the whole—does not present a united front against either idolatry or the spirit of the world. While not ready for union, many are ready for such a movement as will combine

the efforts of all and direct against the things that ought not to be."

Rev. J. P. Landis, D. D., president of the Young People's Christian Union, United Brethren, says:—

"As far, therefore, as I have a right to speak for our Young People's Christian Union, I say, by all means let there be a meeting called of all the young people's organizations; and as 1900 seems to be a specially appropriate time, let it be then. We shall vote for a Federation."

It is worthy of note that all these gentlemen feel sure that the proposed federation could *do no harm to any denominational interests.* Evidently they are not aware that their chief concern is for the preservation of their several denominations. The Lord's plan is very unpopular, because it denounces sectarianism where it does not ignore it entirely.

THE NEXT STEP PREPARING

Comparatively few realize the motive which lies back of the movement of leaders towards the federation of religious systems. Neglecting to observe the testimony of God's Word, that the mission of this age is the selection of the Church of overcomers to be, with Christ their Lord, the "Royal Priesthood," to bless and rule and teach the world during Christ's Millennial kingdom, they have, to the contrary, concocted the theory that the conversion and ruling of the world is the church's mission during the present age. After eighteen centuries they find that in this zenith of their efforts nearly two hundred beings are born for every one that is even nominally converted; and probably five or ten thousand for every one that becomes fully consecrated "overcomers" or "saint." They reflect that at this rate it will be many centuries yet before they could hope to bring about conditions by which God's will would be done on earth as in heaven.

Wishing to encourage each other, and to impress the world, they want union or federation or something which will "make a fair show in the flesh;" and they begin to feel just as Papacy did fifteen centuries ago,—that God wants them to take control of the world in his name and rule it, and enforce religion by civil law. They forget that this same erroneous view, put into execution by Papacy, not only led it to establish the great antichristian counterfeit of God's kingdom, but also led to the persecution, in most terrible forms, of those who stood faithful to the Word of God.

The new movement contemplates a participation in politics as a means of getting control of the world for the Lord; and Christian Citizenship Leagues are being formed. The following is their statement of their object clipped from the *Christian Citizen:*

"Not until the Kingship of Jesus is established over our land and the world, and his teachings are made the rule in all public affairs, will the Christian Citizenship League have achieved its purpose to prepare the way of the Lord. And then it shall be found that not only has the way for his coming been prepared, but that he has indeed and in truth come."

Thus they not only claim that our Lord's second coming cannot take place until they thus *prepare his way,* but finally they intimate that this success will make his *personal* coming unnecessary. They will act as his vice-gerent in establishing righteousness, and can equally be his representative after the important work of conquest is accomplished.

Very true! If they can do all the hard work of conquering the world and devil, they will deserve the glory and honor. It is clear, however, that present arrangements, multiplied tenfold, could never bring to earth the heavenly conditions promised in our Lord's petition. The rightful King must take unto himself his great power and begin his reign, and bind Satan, and liberate the "groaning creation" before peace on earth and good will toward men and glory to God in the highest can be looked for.

CHURCH AND STATE

Evangelist B. F. Mills is advancing along the line above pointed out. He is quoted as saying in a recent discourse:—

"It is a mistake to consider the church as a society for worship or benevolence instead of an agency for transforming the world. *It is the business of the church to see that the state conducts its affairs in a Christian fashion.*"

The editor of the (Syracuse, N. Y.) *Herald* criticizes this utterance very wisely, as follows:—

"Then if the majority in the state were Jews, would it be the business of the Jews to see that the State 'conducted its affairs' in Jewish fashion? Or if a majority were not Christians, would it be the business of the majority to see that the state was conducted in a way not Christian? This is a government by majority, but in order to protect as much as possible the minority against the intolerance and persecution which invariably come with majority rule Constitutions are established as the fundamental law of the State under which the rights of the minority to freedom of speech, freedom of printing and freedom of worship are made sure. The genius of our government is the complete separation of church and state, yet here is a minister of a denomination which knows the meaning or persecution for nonconformity to the ideas of the majority as to what constitutes Christianity, advocating religious domination—which means denominational domination in its logic—in the state.

"Mr. Mills will have difficulty in finding authority in the New Testament for his doctrine that it is the business of the church to supervise the state: It was the fear that the mission of Jesus Christ was to institute a sorely needed revolution in Judea that led chiefly to the persecution and death of the Founder of Christianity.

"Against this charge made by the orthodox Jews he protested. 'Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, means that *he would not have the church see to it that the state was dominated by it.* The words and example of Paul were always in direct refutation of the doctrine enunciated by Mr. Mills. Both knew that the moment the church became political that moment it would begin to lose in spiritual power, and the history of nineteen centuries has proved the scientific soundness of their position. The church cannot have an influence upon the state in the way suggested by Mr. Mills without becoming political.

"It is the business of the church to call men to repentance, to preach the Gospel—the 'glad tidings of great joy'—to work for the spiritual regeneration of mankind through regeneration of the individual. In this business it has employment for all its energies and talents, and thus employing itself it is a more powerful influence for righteousness *in* the state and righteousness *of* the State as a governing corporation than it can possibly be in attempting directly to dictate politics to the state and to be the state. The government of the United States and of the state of New York are as much the governments of the non-Christian as of the Christian; of the Jew as of the Gentile; of the Panthiest as of the Trinitarian; of the Agnostic and Deist as of the strictest of the sect of special creationists who believe in divine direction of the affairs of mankind. It is the business of the Christian church not more than the Jewish church to see to it that the state is dominated by ethical principles, by morality, righteousness, justice and mercy; and it can do this best by following the example of Christ and Paul, not that of Constantine."

"WHAT IS WRONG?"

In the *Christian Endeavor* Rev. C. S. Bullard propounds the question, "What is wrong?" and proceeds to answer it as follows:—

"Every pulpit in the land guarded by law—nearly one hundred thousand men of learning and ability set for the bringing to the attention of other men the life and death message of God—and yet—

"Multiply the twelve apostles by eight thousand and how soon they would turn the world up-side-down! What is wrong?

"Think of England—the brightest part of Europe. Eighty thousand criminals; one hundred and sixty thousand drunkards; one hundred thousand prostitutes; nearly ten hundred thousand paupers, and a drink bill of one hundred and thirty-six million pounds sterling! Is that the best the Gospel of Jesus Christ can do for England?

"Look upon our own land—over seventy-three million population and about twenty million enrolled members in all branches of the church! Seven million young men, of whom but five per cent. are enrolled as members of the church. These, as a fraction of one of the million, attend church somewhat regularly, another million attend occasionally, but five million never attend. Think of arresting over one and a half million of men and women annually—fifty millions in a generation! Crime increases four and a half times faster than the population. What is wrong?

"Here we stand upon the threshold of the twentieth century with the record of forty million people habitually absenting themselves from the house of God! We have perfect machinery and a seemingly large amount of zeal—we are doing everything we can think of to reach the ungodly—we have tried spinning-wheels and grab bags, theatricals and tableaux, broom drills and donkey socials. We have fiddled to them and fed them with ice cream and cake, and tickled them with funny stories, yet 'Ichabod' seems to be written upon everything we do. What is wrong?

"Is there a power that can change these things? What is needed? Paul cries, 'The Gospel is the power of God.' O, that is what is needed—power! POWER! *Power in the church and through the church* IN POLITICS, TO REGENERATE SOCIETY.

The only thing that can correct the things that need correction is the 'Gospel.' Let us apply the Gospel in liberal *doses!*"

Yes, indeed, *power* is needed to bring order and righteousness to all the troublesome questions now perplexing the word, —Labor, Capital, Finance, Socialism, Trusts, True Religion, Sectarianism and Superstition, all need *power*, a mighty power, and wise and good power, to take hold of them to put down the wrong and to lift up the right. But will the church by going into earthly politics be this power? Never! She holds no such commission. On the contrary, if saints could be put into office, it is very doubtful if they could continue to be "saints" under such unfavorable conditions, attempting to rule the world before the time appointed and without their "Head."

Yes, men in every station of life are beginning to see that the world needs a "strong government" to hold it in check; and the more general the enlightenment of the masses the greater this need—to control the avarice and discontent and to cause the bounties of divine providence to minister blessings and happiness to every creature. No earthly power can do this: our Lord's promised kingdom—the fifth universal empire of the earth (Dan. 2:44; 7:22, 27), and it only, can meet the conditions. It was in full view of this necessity, and to meet it, that a second advent of our Lord was promised; —not as man and for suffering of death, but as the Lord of all, in power and great glory, a spirit being—as invisible to men as is the present "prince of this world," Satan, and still more powerful. While the many make ready "Christian Crusades" in politics, and "Boy's Brigades" for future assistance, the true "soldiers of the cross" will fight the good fight of faith against their own weaknesses, while praying to their Lord, "Thy kingdom come: thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

ENFORCING THE DECALOGUE IN KANSAS

The following bill has been introduced in the Legislature of the state of Kansas by Representative Walters. It calls for the enforcement of the Ten Commandments given to Israel at Mt. Sinai:—

"An Act to give statutory force to the Ten Commandments:

"Whereas, The men of the present generation have become doubters and scoffers; and,

"Whereas, They have strayed from the religion of their fathers; and,

"Whereas, They no longer live in the fear of God; and,

"Whereas, Having no fear of punishment beyond the grave, they wantonly violate the law given to the world from Mt. Sinai; therefore,

"Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Kansas:—

"Section 1. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.

"Section 2. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image," etc. [Each one of the commandments constituting a separate section of the Act.]

"Section 11. Any man who shall violate any of the provisions of this Act shall be punished as follows:—

"For violating Section 1, $1,000 fine; for violating Section 2, $1,000 fine and one year in the penitentiary; for violating Section 3 or Section 4, $500 fine; for violating Section 5, $500 and six months in the penitentiary; for violating Section 6, hanged by the neck until dead; for violating Section 7, penitentiary for life; for violating Section 8, fine or imprisonment, in the discretion of the court; for violating Section 9, imprisonment, in the discretion of the court; for violating Section 10, fine and imprisonment, in the discretion of the court.

"Section 12. This Act shall take effect and be in force from and after its publication in the statute book.

"This proposed measure only contemplates in part, and on a small scale, what is proposed in the 'Christian Amendment' to the constitution, which has progressed far beyond the possibilities of a joke. That amendment says that 'the revealed will of Jesus Christ' shall be 'the supreme authority in civil affairs' in every State in the Union. The revealed will of Christ includes the law of ten commandments. The 'Christian Amendment' would do for every State what Mr. Walters' measure proposes to do for the State of Kansas.

"It is proposed that the Kansas Legislature shall enact, 'Thou shalt have no other gods before me.' As the speaking party in this enactment would be the Legislature, the law would be that the Legislature must be the god of everybody in the state. And the god who speaks the law having been determined in the first section of the Act, the same god would be meant by the phrase 'the Lord thy God' in succeeding sections. Thus by the third section it would become blasphemy to speak lightly of the Kansas Legislature, and in the fourth section this assembly would put forth the stupendous claim of having created the heavens and the earth!

"Absurd as such claims would be, they are no more than what is really involved in every instance of religious legislation. For religion being the performance of those duties which an individual owes to his God, only God can rightfully command such duties; and when such duties are commanded by any party, that party by that very act assumes to be God. . . .

"Another point that must not be overlooked is raised by the query as to what will constitute a violation of this Act. Jesus Christ said that hatred in the heart was a violation of the commandment, which says: 'Thou shalt not kill,' which is Section 6 in Mr. Walters' bill. (See Matt. 5:21, 22) No doubt it will be acknowledged that there is no higher authority upon the subject than this. The courts will therefore be obliged to take cognizance of hatred as a violation of Section 6 of this state law, of lust as a violation of Section 7, etc., and inflict the penalties specified in the Act. The enlargement of the state prisons and penitentiaries which the punishment of such persons, together with all who were covetous, would demand, it would be needless to try to specify. The penal institutions would simply have to be made large enough to take in the entire population of the state."

—*American Sentinel.*

We heartily concur in the *Sentinel's* comments, but must point out an inconsistency. The *Sentinel* is an able representative of "Seventh-Day Adventism;" and the backbone of that institution is the Law given at Mt. Sinai, referred to above. That Law is held out continually as the criterion for all "Seventh-Day Adventists;" and it is claimed that *all who do not keep that law will fail to obtain eternal life.* Why then should the *Sentinel*, above all other journals, object to the enforcement of that Law?

Ah! despite its theory, that the Law is in force upon *Christians* as it was upon the Jews, the *Sentinel* cannot help seeing that no member of the fallen race can keep that Law. Hence its comment that, if it be enforced, "the entire population of the state" (including Seventh-Day Adventists) will be found guilty of violating it. The essence of the *Gospel* is that our Lord Jesus, having kept the Law perfectly, gave his life a ransom price (not to break or destroy the Law, but) to justify believers not by the Law, but by faith.

"THY WONDERS ARE A MIGHTY DEEP!"

As a marvel, the telegraph, by which an energy can be communicated at a distance, prepared the way for the still greater marvel, the telephone, by which sounds and tones can be communicated long distances. Next came the Roentgen, or X-ray, by which rays of light can be passed through a plank, a tree, or a human being. Now, finally—no, not *finally*, for we know not what await us in the future still more marvelous—the latest wonder is a method of telegraphy without wires or any other connections. Progress has been made in this direction for some time past, and some success was attained by W. H. Preece, head of the British government telegraph system. But now complete success has been reached by a young Italian named Marconi, whose device has been patented and is now being put into practical operation along the Britsh coast, for communicating from shore stations to light-ships, from half a mile to twenty miles distant.

Experiments show that the electric influence is exerted through or by peculiar vibrations upon the air (250,000,000 per second) which affect a "receiver" and produce a record similar to a telegram by wire. It is expected that an instrument of large size would communicate all around the world simultaneously, wherever "receivers" were placed for recording the messages. These wave currents pass *through* brick, stone and iron walls as readily as through open air. Astounding as it may seem, the only fear expressed is that "in using the instruments on an iron-clad [war vessel] the waves [of ether] might explode the [powder] magazine of the ship."

After six thousand years of human pride and boasting, God is now saying to mankind: "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the people, I will be exalted in the earth."—Psa. 46:10.

What now will so-called Rationalists say to their former boast that they believe only what is tangible? And what about certain Christians (Second Adventists and others) who on rationalistic grounds claim that there could be no such thing as a spirit body, *invisible* to human sight, and accordingly dispute that our Lord, after his resurrection, came into the upper room while "the doors were shut," and claim, contrary to the inspired record, that he opened the doors and came in unnoticed?

By and by the world will have such evidences of invisible things in nature that faith in spiritual things which eye hath not seen nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of the natural man to conceive, will be an easy matter.

Meantime the infidels of the world are rapidly becoming "Spiritualists"—deceived by the fallen angels from whom God's people are protected by the instructions of the holy Scriptures.

TAKE HEED

"Wherewithal shall a young man keep his way pure [keep a clean course in life]? By taking heed thereto according to thy Word."—Psa. 119:9.

Never in all the centuries of the past was the exhortation to "take heed" as opportune as today, when the temperament of the age is aptly illustrated by its two great motive powers, steam and electricity. There is today more rush and force than thought and precision. The active brains of the world are scheming for fortunes and rushing to gain them; and very few in any condition of life take time to consider and to weigh and compare principles and motives of action, to see whether the ends for which they strive are worthy of their efforts. They rush and push and pull because the very conditions of their birth in this time impel them to do so, even though the end of their aspirations be but empty bubbles and bitter disappointments. And this, which is true of the world at large, is also true of the professed Christian church: the active spirit of the age has permeated its pulpits, its pews and its theological schools. But this activity, partaking largely of the spirit of the world, has taken more of a business than of a pious turn, and tends more to the emphasizing of the forms of godliness than to the cultivation of its vital power, and more to worldly than to spiritual prosperity. It was of a similar class in the Jewish age that the Lord said: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider." (Isa. 1:3) Let the thoughtful Christian, therefore, look well to his course and see that he is steering it in exact harmony with the divine Word and plan.

The Psalmist, in the above text, suggests the most worthy ambition of life; *viz.*, to keep our course of life clean and free from the contaminations of this evil world. The suggestion is specially apt in its application to the young, whose tender years and inexperience have as yet learned little beyond the loving discipline of the home circle, which the text presupposes. Parental love, counsel, discipline, example and prayers have thus far guided the youthful feet in the ways of righteousness and peace, and now, at the verge of manhood and womanhood, life's great work and its stern duties and responsibilities must be faced; the youth must come in contact, to some extent at least, with the wickedness of an ungodly world, where the metal of his character will be put to the test, and often to very crucial tests when it is discovered that the way of the ungodly prospers in the present time.

It is true, indeed, that the tendency of "evil communications" is to "corrupt good manners." (1 Cor. 15:33) As the ear becomes accustomed to profanity and to unkind and bitter words, and the eye to sights of misery and injustice, the tendency is to blunt the finer sensibilities of the pure and good, so that in time the heart will become more or less calloused and unsympathetic, unless these unholy influences are steadily resisted and the ways of the world shunned.

But how, inquires the Psalmist, shall a young man keep his way (his course of life) clean? How, in his inexperience and lack of competent wisdom, shall he succeed, often single-handed and alone, in stemming the almost resistless current of evil about him? How can he prosper in business without resorting to the tricks of trade? How can he gain the desired places of social distinction or political preferment, if his course of life is continually against the current of the world's ideas and its means and methods? In other words, how can a man be in the world and not of it?

That such a thing is both desirable and possible to the Christian is plain from our Lord's prayer for his disciples (John 17:15-17), "Holy Father, . . . I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest *keep them from the evil.* They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. Sanctify them [separate them from the evil] through thy truth: thy Word is truth."

The Psalmist raises the question for the very purpose of suggesting the answer, and his answer is in full harmony with our Lord's prayer, not that they should be taken out of the world, but that they should be kept from the evil, showing that the only way for a young man to keep his course of life clean is to take heed thereto according to the Word of the Lord. As the Apostle Paul also says, the "Scriptures given by inspiration of God are profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, . . . and are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."—2 Tim. 3:15, 16.

But the Scriptures nowhere show the Christian how to blend the spirit and methods of Christ with the spirit and methods of the world, in order to make what men call success in life. They do not open up the way to either financial, political or social success, but they do "teach us that, denying ungodliness and worldly desires, we should live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world; looking for that blessed hope [of the Gospel], and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify unto himself a peculiar people [not a people striving after the things of this world, but] zealous of good works." (Titus 2:12-14) Yes, the young man who would follow Christ must forego the ambitions and pleasures of the present life, and live for the enduring and satisfying riches of the life to come.

But the Word of the Lord, full as it is of wisdom and counsel, cannot profit even the professed Christian who does not in a meek and prayerful spirit come to its pages for instruction. Nor does it profit the careless reader who fails to meditate upon its precepts, or who only occasionally looks into the perfect law of liberty and beholds himself, but straightway forgets what manner of man he was (Jas. 1:22-24), and therefore fails to apply the instruction. But he who can truly say: "Thy words were found, and I did *eat them* [I appropriated them diligently to the building up of my character]; and thy Word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart;" "my delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law do I meditate day and night; I meditate also of all thy work, O Lord, and talk of thy doings; I meditate in thy precepts, and have respect unto thy ways; I delight myself in thy statutes, I do not forget thy word" (Jer. 15:16; Psa. 1:2; 77:12; 119:15, 16); these, and only these, are ordering their steps aright, by *taking heed* to the Word of the Lord.

This was the course that Paul recommended to Timothy, that he might keep himself pure from worldly contamination, and be an example and faithful minister to others, saying: "Be thou *an example of the believers*, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. . . . Meditate upon these things, give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all."—1 Tim. 4:12, 15.

The profiting certainly will not appear if the means are not thus used. Character cannot ripen except under proper conditions; and if professions abound where character is lacking, or is not correspondingly developed, how sad is the plight, and how manifest the self-deception to every discerning saint!

In view of these things, therefore, let the young Christian mark well the counsel of wisdom, and take heed to his course according to the Word of the Lord. Let him come to it for answers to all questions of right and duty; and let him study how the perfect law of God—the law of love—applies to all the conditions and circumstances of his daily life and associations and obligations. In so doing there cannot fail to be a steady growth in grace, and the fruits of the spirit will not be lacking.

But youth is not the only time when it is necessary to steer one's course by the Word of the Lord. While the only right way to start in life is by taking heed to our way according to God's Word, it is equally right and necessary to heed it and to meditate upon it to the very end of our days. A life thus spent becomes beautiful in old age, which should show all the fruits of the spirit tinged with the glow of ripeness, and be a loving benediction to all within the range of its influence. Indeed, what a pattern of godliness does every aged saint present when the hoary head is crowned with the beauty of holiness, when a long life of self-denial and self-discipline gives a practical demonstration of the power of divine grace to overcome the downward tendencies of our fallen nature! What a pattern should the aged Christian be, of patient self-forgetfulness, of loving sympathy and gentle forbearance, able to give kindly counsel and timely assistance in various ways to those who are still bearing the burden and heat of the day, cheering them onward and inspiring them

to noble deeds and persistent fortitude, and fully appreciating all their labors of love!

But, alas! the well-spent lives are few. How few have remembered their Creator in the days of their youth, and from youth to age have taken heed to their way according to God's Word! In many cases youth has been worse than wasted in sowing "wild oats," and subsequent years have reaped the bitter harvest; life's discipline has been endured with murmuring and chafing, the disposition has grown sour, and life a tiresome burden. Alas! too often, even among professed Christians, has the failure to "take heed" permitted the unholy passions to flourish to the great detriment of all spiritual progress, until at last but little remains except empty professions which bring only dishonor upon the name of Christ. Such is the result of a mere start in the Christian life with little or no endeavor thereafter to develop Christian character according to God's Word. Yet God is gracious, and he is slow to anger and plenteous in mercy, so that at whatever point in its downward way or its backslidden course, whether in youth or age, the soul halts and changes its course from the paths of sin to the paths of faith and righteousness, there the love of God is made manifest in pardon and peace, and the operations of divine grace are realized in helps and encouragements to pursue the upward way. But, at whatever point we start in the Christian life, from that starting point begins the duty of diligently taking heed to our way according to God's Word. If we grow careless of this duty, and heedlessly blunder along according to our own understanding, meditating upon our own likes and dislikes, our selfish preferences, or our own depraved tastes and ideas, instead of upon the precepts and principles of God's Word, and endeavoring to bring our own ideas and ways to that standard of righteousness day by day and year by year—if such be the listless, shiftless indifference that marks our course, we cannot hope to retain the divine favor; nor can we grow in grace and approximate more and more the likeness of Christ.

The spiritual life, like the physical life, develops according to fixed laws. As the natural life must be nourished and fed according to the laws of nature in order to sustain and develop it and keep it in health, so the spiritual life must be nourished by the various means of grace and fed continually by the Word of the Lord.—"Thy words were found, and I did eat them."

If, then, we realize that, through any measure of neglect, we are out of the way and find in ourselves a low state of spiritual health, let us bestir ourselves to redoubled diligence. No matter how long we may have walked in a blundering way, the Lord stands ready with his grace to help and his presence to cheer as soon as we turn with our whole heart unto him in earnest desire and determination by his grace to overcome. "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile. Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry." But "the face of the Lord is against them that do evil, to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth. . . . The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit."—Psa. 34:13-16, 18.

M. F. RUSSELL.

A TRUTHFUL CRITICISM

"To see a Roman Catholic priest stand within the precincts of his church, and bowing before its altar, while at the same time lecturing from the Bible, and making it his sole arbiter and final court of appeal, is a strange anomaly—indeed, we might say a "new thing under the sun." One is inclined to ask, What does it all mean? Either he is coming round to Protestanism, which makes the Bible its only standard and infallible guide, or he is only giving a seeming support to the Bible by keeping out of sight the baneful doctrines of the mass and purgatory, that thereby he may win back numbers to his fold. If the former is true, we welcome him to the green pastures and still waters of the Word of God. If the latter, we trust all those who appreciate freedom—that freedom so dearly bought—will remember the policy of Rome, "she changes not;" "instruments of cruelty are in her habitation," and she will become more and more the "hold of every foul spirit and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." (Rev. 18:2) Saith the Lord: "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues, for her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." (Rev. 18:4, 5) Let us stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.—Gal. 5:1.

"In looking over the subject matter of the lectures themselves, what struck me most was the entire absence of the Gospel of Christ. On such a theme as the destiny of man we might surely expect that 'the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved' (Acts 4:12) would have been proclaimed full and free; but no. Little wonder, then, that the world is full of agnosticism, gloom and despair when such a Christless Gospel is put forward as the saving truth of God. How one could wish that the Rev. father, instead of closing his lecture by quoting the Law as the way to life, had copied the divine wisdom given to the Apostle Paul, who said to the Philippian jailer, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' (Acts 16:31) For if by the law we have righteousness, then Christ died in vain.

"The world can draw no comfort from these wornout husks of gloom and eternal torment on the one hand, or from the new but unscriptural and unscientific (unproved) notion of evolution on the other. Never did the groaning creation need a Deliverer—and a great one—more than now."

Thus writes Brother C. N. Houston to one of the British journals, commenting on a public discourse on "The Destiny of Man." We commend the method to all who possess the requisite talents. Besides such occasional articles, Brother H. takes betimes "a week off" from his store to colporteur for DAWNS. He usually has excellent success. He is "not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ;" his friends know this; and so does the Lord. To "*overcome*" pride and "the fear of man which bringeth a snare" is a very important item in connection with a full consecration and a desire to be *used up* in the Lord's service.

CELEBRATIONS OF THE MEMORIAL SUPPER

The celebration of the death of the antitypical Paschal Lamb, our Lord Jesus, on its anniversary, this year the evening of April 15, was very general, as judged by the numerous reports thus far received. As usual, the numbers of communicants varied greatly, from two or three individuals to a couple of hundred, and in several instances solitary believers worshiped and partook alone, association with others being impossible. All reports seem to indicate deep spiritual blessing and a growing appreciation of the great event celebrated, as the center of Christian joy and hope.

Those who deny the *ransom*—that we were *bought* with a price, even the precious blood of Christ—have properly neither part nor lot in memorializing that great transaction; nor have those who by lives of sin make themselves "the enemies of the cross of Christ." (Phil. 3:18) Hence the fact that the number at each place, as well as the number of places, seems to show considerable increase over previous celebrations, is a favorable indication.

The occasion at Allegheny will long be remembered by some present. Beginning at 4:30 p. m. there was a baptism service. In a discourse of nearly an hour the true Scriptural idea of immersion was set forth and contrasted with popular but false ideas on the subject. It was shown that water immersion is not for the remission of sins, nor to be a door into an earthly church, but that it is a symbol merely, an outward confession of an immersion of the heart, the will, into the will of Christ; a full consecration or immersion into Christ as members of his mystical body, sharers in his death to the self-will; and in our case also a death to sin. (Rom. 6:3-5) Twenty-four adults (twelve each sex) were immersed in symbol in water, assenting first to their faith in the Lord as their personal Saviour, whose sacrifice for sin formed the only ground-work of their justification and acceptance with the heavenly Father; and, secondly, assenting that they had already consecrated, buried, immersed their wills into the Lord's will, laying ambition, talents, earthly possessions, hopes, fears—all, even life, at the Saviour's feet, to be henceforth, to the end of the race, used not for themselves, but wholly devoted to the service of him who loved us and gave himself for us. It was a solemn and impressive service, not for them alone, but for the hundred or more witnesses present, the majority of whom had made and symbolized the same covenant.

From eight to nine-thirty o'clock the Supper was celebrated. The significance of the unleavened bread and the fruit of the vine as representatives of our Lord's broken body and shed blood, and of our Lord himself as the antitype of the Passover Lamb, were considered: it was shown that as

the institution of the type, the night previous to Israel's departure from Egypt, affected first the *first-born* of Israel and later *all* Israel, delivered from Pharaoh and Egypt, so the death of our Lamb (Christ Jesus—"the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world") affects first, during the Gospel age, the "church of the *first-born*" ones and subsequently, during the Millennium, will affect the deliverance of all who are or who will become God's true servants, delivering them from the slavery of Satan and the present evil world.

The emblems of our Master's broken body and shed blood were sweet to us, and by faith through the emblems we partook of the merits and graces of our Lord and his exceeding great and precious promises vouchsafed for the future. We were sad at the thought of our Lord's sufferings for us; yet glad—so glad—that he paid the great price for us. We noticed also the Apostle's suggestion (1 Cor. 10:16, 17) that the bread and wine not only symbolize our Lord's body and flesh broken for us, but that since we are accepted of him and are reckonedly his flesh and his bones while in the earthly tabernacle, so the bread (*one loaf*) represents our flesh consecrated to death with our Lord, in his service and in the service of his people. Likewise we have a communion (common union or fellowship) in the cup—our earthly lives are consecrated to be poured out in death, that we may partake with our Lord also in his new life—"partakers of the divine nature."—2 Pet. 1:4.

Having celebrated the death of the antitypical Passover Lamb, let us now celebrate the antitypical *feast* of Passover, not for a typical seven days, but for the antitypical period —all time, forever—feeding upon "the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth," and abstaining from all sin, symbolized under the Law by leaven.

We give a few very brief extracts from some of the reports of the Memorial celebration at hand, as follows, requesting that all who reported accept this as our acknowledgment:

Cohoes, N. Y.—The Memorial service was held as usual, and I cannot help but feel that it was the most blessed season that we have yet witnessed; such a deep spiritual atmosphere attending it.

Hegewisch, Ill.—Just a word about our celebration of the Memorial Supper in this place. There were seven of us present—all truth seekers and believers in the ransom. We first sang a few appropriate hymns, then had a short testimony meeting—subject, "Why is Christ precious to me?" Then a season of prayer followed, after which there was a brief review of our reasons for celebrating the Supper at this time, and a short talk on 1 Cor. 11:23-32, especially with the thought of showing forth the Lord's death "till he come." We pictured the eventful night of his betrayal and his death. As we thought of the sufferings, the bloody sweat, the broken heart of our dear Saviour, the tears came in all our eyes. Then, as the emblems were passed, we felt as never before the truth, "Is it not a participation of the body and blood of the Anointed One?"

One thing I must not forget: We each made some request to be prayed for, and the answers received during the past few days have been truly wonderful. Praise God! The one thought uppermost in our service seemed to be—

"We may not know, we cannot tell
What pain he had to bear,
But we may know it was *for us*
He hung and suffered there."

Waukesha, Wis.—Eight met to partake of the bread and wine of our Lord's Passover. We each renewed our covenant relationship for the new sacred year, promising to be more zealous if possible in the Master's work.

Salem, Ore.—I am happy to be able to write once more of our meeting together to commemorate our Lord's death, "till he come." Although we have not had many additions this year, we were all rejoiced to meet together without one missing, all in their places, and none sorry of their covenant, but all confessing to growth in Christian faith and fellowship.

We earnestly desire your prayers in our behalf that we may grow in all the graces needed to become like our Master and true representatives of him, while spreading this glorious truth. We all received a great blessing, and we pray for all the little flock everywhere.

Ballston, N. Y.—Greeting in the Lord Jesus Christ, our "Elder Brother!" At the Supper there were seven present, a goodly number, and we had a spiritual feast. It is not yet a year since the first one of six came into the light. I was requested to take charge of the Supper, and I did so, meekly but not doubtingly. Blessed be God that giveth us the victory! I am assured that we pray in union of spirit; and the Father's Word through Christ is being manifested to his saints. Glorious is our hope!

Hayne, N. C.—Brother Draper has come and gone, but his influence remains. Notwithstanding the busy season, made more so by excessive rains which had just abated, the attendance at the series of meetings was very good, about filling the house in the day time, while many could not get in it in the evenings; so much so that on invitation of prominent Baptists, who begin to see and love the truth, services were held in their larger church house, which would not accommodate many that went. People of all creeds here and nearly all of the neighborhood heard and seemed to understand. Five symbolized baptism, and others expressed a desire to do so after hearing the explanation of the symbol, and when it should be performed. About thirty-five partook of the Supper, three times as many as ever before. It was indeed a delightful occasion. We are truly grateful for the brother's visit, as it seemed to be the right time for some who are beginning to see, and others who are willing to hear. We feel like much good has been accomplished here, and would like to have him come every year, or oftener, but want him to go where he can do the most good, and expect to do more to help send him. Pray for us that we may grow in grace and hold out faithful to the end.

Indianola, Ia.—Five met on Thursday evening to celebrate the Memorial Supper. I think we all realized a blessing in a renewal of our consecration and consequent obligation. May the Lord help and keep all his own everywhere.

St. Petersburg, Fla.—About fourteen rejoiced in commemorating the Lord's last Supper, and a very delightful meeting it was. We all felt the necessity of a closer walk with God, more love for Christ and the brethren, a fuller dependence on God's promises and a more careful watch, lest the enemy tempt us from the "faith once delivered to the saints." Our Norwegian brethren thought best to partake by themselves.

Huron, S. D.—Last night six of us met to remember our Lord's death "until he come," and to renew our covenant with him. After prayer we read John 6:31-57; 1 Cor. 10:16, 17 and 11:27-30. Sweetly the Lord met with us. I never felt the force and beauty of the symbol so much before, and I believe that was the experience of all. Our hearts burned within us. May we be kept willing to be led.

Philadelphia, Pa.—The church here observed the Memorial Supper last evening. About forty partook of the emblems, and eight (four brethren and four sisters) symbolized their consecration into Christ's death by immersion.

Bethlehem, Pa.—Our little meeting here last evening proved a season of sweet refreshing to all present. There were thirteen, and our dear Redeemer seemed very near and dear to us. We were greatly strengthened and blessed, specially as we realized that all the Lord's people everywhere were meeting for the same purpose and praying for one another. May we be kept humble, and constantly watch and pray!

Columbus, O.—Our little band met last night to remember the anniversary of our Lord's death on our behalf. We had a very interesting and profitable waiting on the Lord, and many expressed themselves as having been refreshed and edified. Twenty-seven partook of the emblems, six of our class being absent, but we had five from adjoining towns. We felt that the influence of the Lord was present. All seemed to feel deeply the solemnity of the occasion, and yet every face seemed joyful, as if while sympathising with our Lord in his suffering, they could not help rejoicing over the result to both himself and to us and to the world. We remembered all the little bands of like precious faith and felt that we were remembered by others.

New York City.—The church here held the meeting in commemoration of the Lord's death.

A devotional meeting preceded, beginning at 6:30 and closing at 8 p. m., which proved a genuine feast of spiritual food and a fitting preparation for the principal service. About

sixty were present, including some from neighboring localities. The Lord was there and blessed us wonderfully, as he is constantly with us, teaching, leading and sustaining us in every condition, according to his promise, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the age."

Dinwiddie County, Va.—I humbly trust I may never count the blood of my Redeemer a worthless thing or cast off the covering of his name. We read for our Memorial lesson the 13, 14 and 15 chapters of John. They contain much for prayerful thought and study. The love of the Saviour is most touchingly manifested in his tender solicitude for his disciples and his words of counsel to them, even though troubled that his hour was so near at hand. We partook of the emblems, realizing that we were again renewing our covenant to be faithful unto death.

Cambuslang, Scotland.—Fourteen Christians met here last night to commemorate the Lord's death, and it was a time of great blessing. I believe we all felt the Lord's presence with great power.

Iowa.—I am still seeking to serve the Master to the best of my ability. I intended to meet with a few brethren and sisters at ———— for the celebration of the death of our dear Lord, but circumstances did not favor; but the dear Lord permitted me to partake of the emblems alone, and I had a precious, soul-refreshing feast.

Boston, Mass.—The work is progressing grandly under our great Captain. At the Memorial fifty-three were present, and it was a season of sweet communion with Christ. The Sunday previous eight (seven sisters and one brother) were immersed. We obtained the use of the Disciples' church. Every one of these dear people give evidence of full consecration.

North Indianapolis, Ind.—Brother Wise conducted the services here, and it was a very blessed service—twenty-one present, most, if not all, of whom have made a public consecration of themselves, their lives, their all, to God, through the beautiful and appropriate symbol of water baptism.

Linton, Ind.—Twenty to twenty-five, the majority of whom had never before seen the real import of this Memorial, nor the propriety of celebrating it but once a year, commemorated the death of "the Lamb of God."

Los Posas, Cal.—We had a precious season at the Memorial Supper. There were twelve present—the same number as last year. We felt drawn nearer to the Master and to each other in Christian fellowship.

Scranton, Pa.—We had a very precious season of spiritual communion at the recent celebration of the Memorial Supper. Twenty were present—eight more than last year. We are seeking to grow more and more in the grace as well as in the knowledge of our Lord.

Grass Valley, Cal.—Five of us partook of the Memorial Supper, feeling our own unworthiness, the value of the covering of the precious blood and resolved to live nearer than ever to our blessed Lord. Two were immersed.

Oakland, Md.—We enjoyed a very pleasant season of communion on the occasion of the Memorial Supper celebration. Twenty-four were present, and about one-half the number partook of the emblems of our Lord's broken body and shed blood. It was an impressive service—the most so far of any ever enjoyed by us here.

PAUL'S MESSAGE TO THE JEWS

MAY 9.—Acts 13:26-39.

"Through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins."—Acts 13:38.

Paul and his company did not stop at Perga, where they landed, but proceeded about one hundred miles inland to Antioch, probably because the inhabitants of the latter place were of a more intelligent class. The Apostle was not looking for the most degraded people, but for the most intelligent, and particularly those who were Jews or who had come in contact with the Jewish religion. This was a different Antioch from the place in Syria of the same name, whence they commenced their journey. As was their custom, they immediately sought prepared soil in which to sow the Gospel seed: they went, therefore, to the Jewish synagogue. According to the Jewish custom a portion of the Hebrew Scriptures was read in the hearing of the audience, and the chief men of the congregation, discerning the intelligence of their visitors, asked them to make some remarks. It has been presumed by some that, as Paul's discourse seems to make reference to Deut. 1:31 and Isa. 55:3, these Scriptures had probably been portions of the reading lesson in the synagogue, and that the Apostle took the daily lesson as the text for his discourse.

The Apostle Paul was the spokesman, and without going forward to the rostrum, he spoke from his place in the synagogue, addressing first those who were Israelites by birth, and secondly, such Gentiles as had become proselytes to the Jewish religion, and who therefore met with them in worship, "Men of Israel and ye that fear God." Beginning with the history of God's dealing with Israel, the Apostle reviewed that history down to the time of Christ; thus wisely giving his auditors assurance of his full sympathy with the Jewish hopes and the divine promises, quickening in their hearts the desire for the long promised Messiah and reviving their hopes in the great promises to be fulfilled through him.

Having thus gained the attention and interest of his hearers, he was ready to preach unto them the crucified Messiah, and (verse 26) he now intimated that the message which he bore to them was one of special favor. They were aware that the most pious Jews resided in Jerusalem and Palestine, and that they themselves were reckoned as being to some extent alienated from God and from the promises, because they had preferred a residence among the Gentiles, rather than to the more zealous Jews of Palestine. He explained (1) that their fellow Jews, including the leaders of the nation, at Jerusalem had proved themselves unworthy of the Gospel by rejecting and crucifying Messiah; and (2) that this very crucifixion, so far from overthrowing the divine arrangement, had merely been another step in the program foretold by the Lord by the mouth of his holy prophets. He pointed out that the crucifiers of Messiah had merely "fulfilled all that was written of him." Supposing a question in their minds—How could it be that the chief priests and chief religionists of our race could make so great a mistake, and so fail to rightly interpret the prophets?—the Apostle answers the objection, telling them that it was "because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every Sabbath day [and which] they have fulfilled in condemning him."

But this is not all—"God raised him from the dead," and of this we also have witness; and this message of the death and resurrection of Messiah constitutes the "glad tidings" of the fulfillment of God's promises made to father Abraham." This Jesus is the "seed" of Abraham, through the merit of whose death and by virtue of whose resurrection the promise to Abraham shall be fulfilled—that in him "all the families of the earth shall be blessed" with a full opportunity of eternal life.

With his usual logic the Apostle anticipated objections in the minds of his hearers—Could Messiah die? etc., and he proceeds to prove to them from the words of the prophets that thus it was written before hand. Although Messiah had long existed as the archangel, nevertheless the prophet David, speaking for God, said concerning him: "Thou are my son, this day have I begotten [literally *borne* or *delivered*] thee." The Apostle would have his hearers note that this birth mentioned referred to our Lord's resurrection, as it is written, he was the "first born from the dead," "the first born among many brethren." If Messiah was to be thus *born from the dead*, it implied that he must first die, and hence the Apostle gives this as a prophetic prediction fulfilled in our Lord's experiences.

He quotes again the words of Jehovah through the prophet, addressed to Messiah—"I will give you the sure mercies of David,"—*i. e.*, I will make sure to thee forever the mercies of David. The Apostle quotes this to prove that, although Messiah as Michael the archangel had been great even before David's time, yet it would be at a later date, and as a result of some work which he would perform, that the mercies promised to David and his seed would be *made sure* to Messiah. This transaction was the giving of "his life a ransom for all," and the making sure to him of the Davidic promises by the Almighty was evidenced "in that he raised him from the dead."

In harmony with this is another statement by the prophet David, which evidently referred to Messiah and not to David himself, since it was not true of David. It reads, "Thou shalt not suffer thy holy one to see corruption." By this reference the Apostle would prove to them further, that God has spe-

cially promised the resurrection of Messiah, and that thus was indicated his death and temporary subjection almost to corruption. This could not apply to David, who did see corruption to the full; but it was true of Christ, who "saw no corruption," though brought down almost within its grasp.

Then comes our Golden Text, which is the center and pith of the Apostle's discourse. He was not merely talking to tickle their ears respecting their being the seed of Abraham, nor was he talking for the purpose of showing his comprehensive grasp of Israel's history; nor was he merely telling them the story of our Lord's crucifixion. More than all this, it was an individual message to every heart before him in condition to receive it, namely, "Through *this man* is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." The Apostle does not refer to something that was done by our Lord as the archangel before "he was made flesh" (John 1:14), nor does he refer to any work to be done by him in his new, highly exalted condition, "set down with his Father in his throne" and partaker of his divine nature; but he here refers to the work done by "*the man*, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all" (1 Tim. 2:5, 6) at Calvary. Thus the Apostle again emphasizes the fact that "as by *a man* came death, by *a man* also came the resurrection of the dead." (1 Cor. 15:21) Yes, this is the center of the Gospel proclamation that the failure of the first perfect man was fully offset by the sacrifice of "the man Christ Jesus," and that it was to this end that it was needful for our Lord to leave the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, to become poor (in the sense of taking our lower nature—but not its blemishes, for he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners"); and yielding up this human nature a *ransom-price* or corresponding price for the life forfeited by father Adam for himself and his race. This is the basis upon which every offer to grace is presented by the Scriptures. And now, he who was the Father's agent in the redemptive work is to be the Father's agent also in the work of "blessing" all the redeemed with ample opportunities for return to divine favor —the first step of which is the forgiveness of sins.

Whoever realizes the divine perfection and himself a sinner, imperfect and under condemnation of Justice, and desires reconciliation with God—and the result thereof, eternal life —such, and such only, are prepared to receive the Gospel of redemption and forgiveness and help. "By him all that believe [after the manner described] are justified from all things [reckoned right, just, pure and perfect, notwithstanding all their inherent blemishes and uncontrollable weaknesses]." From none of these things could the law of Moses justify any. The law of Moses condemned every failure, but was powerless to forgive, and had no means of making permanent atonement or covering for those who were under that covenant, because its mediator, Moses, did not and (being himself a member of the fallen race) could not fulfill that covenant and satisfy its demands in his own person, for himself and the people. Hence, Moses and his covenant had not power to grant mercy or justification, as can be done under the New Covenant by its mediator, Christ Jesus, who sealed it with his own precious blood, "a ransom for all."

Paul preached the only genuine Gospel—the only one authorized—the everlasting Gospel, which ultimately must be preached to every creature.

A LIGHT TO THE GENTILES

MAY 16.—Acts 14:11-22.

"I have set thee to be a light to the Gentiles."—Acts 13:47.

"Let their table become a snare and a trap unto them," said the Prophet respecting Israel. Their "table" consisted of the divine favors and truths which were spread before Israel. "What advantage then hath a Jew? Much every way; chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God." Divine favor produced pride of heart instead of humility, and unfitted the majority of Israelites to inherit the chief blessing offered to that nation. Consequently the words of the Apostle (considered in our last lesson), logical and convincing, in that they were in harmony with the testimony of the Law and the prophets concerning the Messiah, were nevertheless coldly received, because they ran counter to certain Jewish prejudices: (1) Although Paul preached a Jewish Messiah, it was the crucified One. (2) If his message were true, it reflected very discreditably upon the heads of their nation and church, of whom they had been accustomed to boast as the greatest and holiest teachers of the world. (3) If the Apostle's message was true, it vitiated if it did not utterly destroy their long cherished *national hopes* that Israel would shortly be the great nation of earth, in principal power, instead of Rome. The Messiah for whom they hoped was not the meek and lowly crucified One whom the Apostle preached, but a mighty, earthly conqueror of men and nations. (4) If the Apostle's preaching were correct, Israel was no longer in a place of preference above the other nations, and those who would accept Jesus of Nazareth as Messiah, whether Jews or Gentiles, would become the holy and divinely recognized kingdom on a common level. The various promises which in their selfishness they misinterpreted, served to blind them to the pure, true light of the Gospel as it now shone upon them.

But those of their number who had been proselyted from amongst the Gentiles had less cause for stumbling on these points, being less prejudiced by national pride and selfishness. These seem to have heard the message with true appreciation and inquired for further opportunities of meeting and hearing more of the good tidings, and the privilege of bringing with them Gentile friends who were feeling after God (verse 42). The result of the second meeting was a little nucleus of believers. By and by the news of the new Jewish gospel became noised abroad throughout the city, the result being a large concourse to the synagogue on the following Sabbath.

Here was a new line of temptation to reject the Gospel, which bore upon such Jews as were not in proper condition of heart to receive it; the concourse of the Gentiles made them "envious." They said within themselves: We have tried long and earnestly to make an impression upon these Gentiles, but they seem to have no ear for the Law of Moses, few of them attend our meetings: but now that these missionaries of a new gospel have come they seem both willing and anxious to hear them. The result will be that they will despise the Law of Moses, and claim that our church is breaking up, and that after waiting for Messiah for centuries our holiest people crucified him. Thus we shall become a reproach in the eyes of our neighbors, even if we reject this new gospel, and still more so if we receive it. Their selfishness and envy triumphed, and then they began to think of and use all the arguments they could find in opposition to the teachings of Paul—even "blaspheming" the Messiah whom he preached. Thus the greatest and grandest truths become the most crucial tests, stumbling the proud and selfish, and lifting up and blessing the humble and devout. There is a great lesson here for all. As our Lord said, "Take heed how ye hear."

Then Paul and Barnabas told them very plainly that while it was necessary that the Gospel should be preached first to Israel, as per divine promise, it was nevertheless now to be extended beyond them to all Gentiles. As usual he quoted them a text on this subject from the Old Testament, saying, Thus the Lord through the prophet commanded us: "I have set thee [Christ] to be a light to the Gentiles, that thou shouldest be for salvation unto the ends of the earth." The rightly disposed among the Gentiles were glad of this message, but the Jews, who should have rejoiced at the broadening of the divine mercy and grace, only hardened their hearts the more against the message; because the light and favor which they had already received had not dissolved the selfishness of their natural hearts.

Concerning the Gentiles it is written, "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed"—better translated, "As many as were *disposed* for everlasting life believed;" as many as were in the right attitude of heart, who desired reconciliation with God and eternal life along the lines preached by the apostle, believed.

But as usual the majority were in opposition to the truth, and amongst their number were found some of the most religious and most prominent. These raised the persecution, and "the brethren," obeying the Word of the Lord, "When they persecute you in one city, flee unto another," shook off the dust from their feet and departed for Iconium, where, notwithstanding the prejudice which spread from Antioch, quite an interest was aroused; and when later an endeavor was made to stone them there they fled to Lystra, the scene of the present lesson, where the Apostle Paul performed a very notable miracle, healing a cripple. The people, seeing it, came to the conclusion that as their heathen mythologies told of the visits there of gods in the form of men, in the past, this must be another such occasion. Barnabas, the elder and more venerable looking of the two, they called Jupiter; and Paul, the fluent speaker, they called Mercury. When the brethren found that they were about to do sacrifice to them, they went quickly into the crowd, explaining that they were merely men, and quite in opposition to such procedure, were there for the purpose of explaining to them the true God and the true

sacrifice for sin and not there to receive homage or plaudits.

What a temptation would have been here for any not well controlled by the Lord's spirit! How many arguments the world, the flesh and the devil could bring up to encourage them in accepting the homage of the people! It would have been a pleasant experience to be treated as gods, feasted and honored, as a change from their usual experiences of privation, persecution and tribulation. They might have reasoned moreover, that by accepting a little homage they might gain a larger amount of influence with the people and thus pave the way for a gradual presentation of the Gospel. Or they might accept the homage applied to themselves in a symbolic fashion as true, might speak of the Lord Jesus as a still greater God than themselves, and Jehovah as the Almighty God above all, and might thus put a *favorable turn* to the superstitions of the people. But all of this would have been subterfuge which would have done injury not only to the people, and to the Gospel, but also to the brethren themselves. And altho they did no more than their duty in resisting the homage as they did, nevertheless we note in the fact that they did it with alacrity, the proper spirit of loyalty to the one God and our Lord Jesus Christ, and the properly prompt resistance of every suggestion of the adversity towards self-aggrandizement or self-exaltation. Would that this noble spirit were fully exemplified in all of the Lord's people! Let us take well to heart the lesson of *promptness* in resisting the devil's baits for the weak points of our earthly natures. We are not ignorant of his devices.

The Apostle immediately made this mistaken reverence a text for a discourse in which he presented to his hearers, the one true God as the source of every blessing.

But persecution followed them, and the same people who at one time were ready to offer them sacrifices, stoned Paul as they supposed to death. Miraculously revived, he departed with Barnabas to the next field of labor, Derbe, where he found some more (pupils) ready to enter the school of Christ as disciples.

Notwithstanding persecution in these various cities, the brethren were mindful of the interests of the Lord's flock, and returned to them for the purpose of strengthening or confirming the faith of those who already believed, but apparently with no thought of public meetings; the inference being that all who were "*disposed*" to accept the offers of eternal life under the Gospel call had already heard the message. These, however, needed help and development. This is a point too frequently lost sight of today by servants of the Gospel; public preaching is very proper and necessary, but in addition "the flock of God" needs constant feeding. Quite evidently the brethren had no expectation that the Gospel, even when preached under plenary inspiration, would convert all, or even a majority, of the people. Knowing that God designed it for the selecting of the "little flock" to be joint-heirs with Christ in his kingdom they acted accordingly.

We note that in these exhortations to believers an important place is accorded to "faith," and we have found in our own experience that a well-founded faith is essential to a well constructed character built upon it. The second point of their exhortation to the believers was,—that "through much tribulation must we enter into the kingdom of God." They did not tell them that all their tribulation was past and that God would protect them from any in the future, because they had believed, neither did they tell them that the kingdom of God consisted of a work of grace in their hearts; neither did they assure them that they already were the kingdom of God in the full sense; but on the contrary they assured them that this kingdom of God, which Israel had failed to attain, because not ready of heart to receive their King, had been postponed of establishment until God should select from the Jews and Gentiles "a people for his name" to be joint heirs with the Messiah in his kingdom. They would therefore have the believers *wait* for the kingdom for which they pray, "Thy kingdom come;" assuring them that the narrow path which leads to the kingdom signifies much experience in tribulation as fitting and preparing them for a share in that kingdom, by developing in them good characters as copies of God's dear Son.

How necessary that this should be the exhortation to believers still! The kingdom is a great prize, and he who would attain it must run faithfully and endure hardness, and that unto the end of his race. For such is laid up a crown of righteousness which the Lord of righteousness will give him in that day.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

THE DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS GONE TO SEED

"A dispatch from Berlin relates that the Emperor William 'has attended the consecration of two new churches, and presented to each a Bible containing his autograph and a text of Scripture.' The text in one was from John (15:5), 'Without me ye can do nothing;' in the other, from Jeremiah (7:23), 'Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and ye shall be my people.'

"These texts written by any other sovereign, even the czar, would have passed without further notice than as showing his orthodoxy, his desire to set an example in faith to his people, but coming from William they excite a wholly different thought. Admitting that the dark suspicions of his insanity heard from time to time are the inventions of his enemies, ample reason remains to believe that he is not always fully responsible for his language or his acts.

"Roman emperors set up statues of themselves and commanded the people to bow down to them in worship, in language not very different from that which this man has repeatedly used. That explains why the newspaper writers pitched upon those texts, which would have been passed unheeded if inscribed by any other man."—*The Pittsburg Daily News.*

In the German Emperor we have the father, papa or pope, of Germany—its earthly god or mighty one, whose will must be done in Germany, as the Almighty's will is done in heaven. He is the civil and ecclesiastical head of the so-called "Protestant Germany." He holds the reins of power and so proclaims himself; and his subjects, while generally repudiating such claims, are so bound by their necessities and by the power put into their emperor's hands, that they cannot help themselves.

In the Czar of Russia we have another pope, the civil and ecclesiastical head of the millions of Russia and the Greek Catholic church; who similarly poses as God's vicegerent or representative. Less enlightened than the Germans, many of his subjects would worship him if so commanded. Indeed, they do enshrine and worship his representative, the minister of religion, whose portrait by law is exposed in all public offices with a continually lighted lamp before it, for the adoration of the people. The writer, when in Russia, seeing the portrait everywhere, inquired who it represented, and was answered, "That is Nicholas—that is our god."

The pope at Rome is the third pope, but, divested of power, his influence depends upon his securing support to his claims by civil rulers (not so ambitious as those of Germany and Russia) who are willing to give him their allegiance. The only one willing to do this today is the emperor of Austria.

Here we have the three Emperors of Europe representing autocratic powers and most opposed to everything like religious or political freedom of thought or action, and all are believers, almost to the extent of insanity, that the secular and religious control of the world is in their hands by divine appointment. It is not strange, therefore, that the recent visit of the German Emperor to the Emperor of Austria-Hungary, followed by a visit of the latter ruler to the Emperor or Czar of Russia, has given rise to the conclusion that an *alliance* of the three empires of Europe is about to be consummated. Not only do the autocratic and "divine right" sentiments of their rulers favor such an alliance, but their temporal interests as well. Russia is glad to drop fickle France with the republican sentiments, and Germany is glad to drop poor and weak Italy. On the whole, the "Imperial Alliance" is the strongest national combination of modern times. The design evidently is that at the proper time Austria and Russia will divide European Turkey, while Germany will be permitted quietly to absorb Holland, her navy and her colonies. At such a time Great Britain will probably improve her opportunity to take possession of Palestine, and thus will its doors be again thrown open to the Jew, and under conditions more favorable than ever before, facilitating the fulfilment of prophecy to this effect. A few years would work marvelous changes there under such conditions. Meantime the preparations for Jewish colonization progress at a wonderful rate among Jewish "Zion" societies.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF YORK IN RUSSIA

"The Anglican church appears to weary of her 'splendid isolation.' Not content with collecting, as she will this year,

all her sister and daughter churches at Lambeth, in a gathering which will include representatives from every continent, and at least prove to the world that she is as little insular in influence as in aims, she is making overtures of friendship to other churches which she once regarded only as hostile rivals. It is but a few months since some of her leading spirits asked Rome once more to acknowledge her rank in the Christian Hierarchy by admitting the validity of her Orders, and now she is making overtures, or at least offering courtesies, to the Holy Orthodox church, a corporation as ancient as that of Rome, almost as proud and independent, and destined in the near future, to as large an area of sway or influence. The Archbishop of York is hardly visiting the great ecclesiastics of Russia out of mere curiosity, or with a desire to reveal to them that there are Protestant prelates as dignified and as secure in their dignity as themselves. He undoubtedly wishes to draw the churches closer, if only in the bonds of friendship."—*London Spectator.*

There seems little likelihood of union between the church of England and the Greek church of Russia; but evidently they desire to draw closer together. Not long since all Protestants seemed anxious to take the Gospel to the poor benighted ones deluded by the Greek and Roman Catholic churches into the worship of images, offering of incense before pictures, etc. But a desire to count numbers and make a fair show in the flesh is changing all this.

On this visit the London *Globe* says:—

"It turns out that one object of Archbishop Maclagan's visit to Russia was to carry the ecclesiastical authorities there the answer of the English Primates to the Pope's Bull. The 'Novoe Vremya' is among the Russian newspapers which welcome the Archbishop. His visit, says that journal, 'emphasizes the fact that in spite of all national, social, economic, political and religious differences between civilized countries and peoples, the aspiration for the unity of the churches is continually breaking forth.' Dr. Maclagan has been cordially received wherever he has gone, both by Russian churchmen and high state functionaries."

FORTY-SEVEN MINISTERS PROTESTED

Recently Bishop Sessums of the Episcopal church, New Orleans, preached a discourse which was printed in the *Picayune*. Something of its character may be judged by the following items of protest published in the *Times-Democrat* (New Orleans), May 6, '97, over the signatures of forty-seven ministers of that city, as follows:—

"The undersigned ministers of the Gospel in different branches of the Church of Jesus Christ unite in this public protest against the exposition of Christianity given by Bishop Sessums, as put forth in the *Picayune* under the sanction of his name. It is, in our judgment, a complete surrender of the whole system of grace revealed in the holy Scriptures. So far from being 'the old religion in the new language,' it is another religion in language which does not contain a single new suggestion. The syllabus offered to us is only a compend of the old heresies which have afflicted the Church of God in ages past. The 'old religion' is swept out of the Scriptures so completely that not a trace is left of that 'grace of God which bringeth salvation.' This will appear from the following specifications of its numerous errors:—

"1. Its undisguised Pantheism, in denying the personality of the divine Being, reduces him to a mere fetich.

"2. The explicit denial of the fall of man from a state of primitive holiness, with the derivation of a corrupt nature consequent thereupon.

"3. In the express denial that Christ hath 'redeemed us by his blood,' being not a sacrificial offering for sin, but consisting merely in the influence of a good example reclaiming man from the error of his way.

"4. In the open disavowal of belief in any judicial process against the sinner, and the absolute denial of the future punishment of the wicked in the world to come.

"5. In the assertion of the final restoration of all men to the favor of God in a state of probation after death.

"6. The sinking of religion into mere humanitarism, bounded only by the second table of the law, and in which God has no rights, through the practical abolition of the first table.

"7. The significant omission, in a scheme professing to define the gospel of Christ, of the necessity of faith in the Redeemer and of repentance for sin, of love to God or any of the graces of the holy spirit.

"We purposely omit the mention of others clearly implied in the language of the bishop, confining ourselves to those which are explicitly avowed and which spring of necessity from the seed-plot of Pantheism. It is not our design to inflict upon this community a theological controversy which must range over the entire field of Christian doctrine—and that, too, before a tribunal which has no power to issue the case in a formal verdict.

"But, set for the defense of the faith as ministers of the gospel, entire silence would implicate us in the guilt of betrayal of the truth. We cannot, therefore, but deliver, once for all, this testimony against another gospel than that delivered us in the Word of God. Side by side with this, our protest, we append the syllabus of Bishop Sessums, that the reader may compare the two and judge for himself upon the issue made."

We are glad to note that the ministers of New Orleans as a whole are so loyal to the teachings of God's Word respecting the fall of man and his redemption by "the precious blood of Christ." We are sorry that in the Northern States there are few ministers who still hold to these cardinal and fundamental doctrines.

But what is driving off, from the teaching of the Bible, Bishop Sessums and *many* (the majority of city ministers) in the North?

It is the failure to recognize the logical results of the "*ransom for all!*" that he "tasted death for *every man.*" Admit the value of the precious blood as "a propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins [the church's sins], and *not for ours only,* but also for the sins of the *whole world,*" and thinking people will not be driven by the wholesale from their faith in it.

But such an admission of the true *value* of the blood proves a future opportunity for *knowledge* and *trial* for the millions who have gone down into the great prison-house of death without knowledge and trial. As surely as the ransom was for *all,* so surely *all* must be brought to a knowledge of the truth soon or later—else, so far as the mass of mankind is concerned, Christ died in vain; for, surely, hundreds of millions died before the ransom was given, and other hundreds of millions have died since without knowledge of the only name given under heaven or amongst men whereby we must be saved.

Let God and his Word be true! The sacrifice has been offered and accepted, the church has been and is being blessed by it, and by and by, "in due time," it shall be testified to *all;*—and that will be the world's trial time, as this is the church's. No Scripture can be found which limits the testimony and blessing resulting from the shedding of the precious blood to the present age or the present life. Quite to the contrary;—unless there be a future opportunity for the majority of our race, many precious promises of God will fail, including his promise and oath to Abraham,—"In thy seed shall *all the families of the earth* be blessed;" and our dear Redeemer will not be the "*True Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.*"

We, too, object to such a future probation as pantheists teach, and therefore can agree to protest No. 5. But we heartily believe in, and advocate as the only key to the harmony of the Bible, a future probation for all who have not had one in the present life;—because *a probation for all* was bought by the one sacrifice, given once for all at Calvary.

METHODIST ESTIMATE OF BROTHERHOOD

Quite a commotion has been caused in Methodist circles lately by the published statement that "The Methodist Book Concern" of New York has a Roman Catholic foreman over its Composing Room another is assistant foreman in the Press Room, and another is foreman of the Bible publishing department. These, it seems, are gradually discharging Protestants and supplying their places with Roman Catholics. Rev. Dr. Mains, one of the managers of the Concern, explaining away the matter said (as reported by the Boston Herald) that his foreman "was probably a Catholic." He had called him 'Brother' Cassidy many years without *knowing* or *caring* what his religion was." Christian *brotherhood* has become very cheap when given without knowledge or care as to whether the recipient even professes to follow Christ or Anti-Christ;—and that by a prominent exponent of Christian brotherhood.

The Philadelphia *Record* says that the news from the financial centers of Europe is to the effect that the moneylenders "are willing to lend Turkey five times as much money as Greece, at one-half the interest." *Sentiment* weighs in the pulpit, the platform and the press, but goes for naught in the financial affairs of the world—great and small.

"I tell you," said a rabid Free-thinker, "the idea that there is a God never comes into my head." "Ah, precisely like my dog," was the reply. "But there is this difference—he does not go round howling about it."—*Selected.*

THE SECRET OF A HAPPY DAY

Just to let thy Father do what he will;
Just to know that he is true, and be still.
Just to follow, hour by hour, as he leadeth;
Just to draw the moment's power, as it needeth.
Just to trust him, that is all. Then the day will surely be
Peaceful, whatso'er befall, bright and blessed, calm and free.

Just to let him speak to thee through his Word,
Watching, that his voice may be clearly heard.
Just to tell him everything, as it rises,
And at once to him to bring all surprises.
Just to listen, and to stay where you cannot miss his voice.
This is all! and thus today, you communing, shall rejoice.

Just to ask him what to do all the day,
And to make you quick and true to obey.
Just to know the needed grace he bestoweth,
Every bar of time and place overfloweth.
Just to take thy orders straight from the Master's own command.
Blessed day! when thus we wait always at our Sovereign's hand.

Just to recollect his love, always true;
Always shining from above, always new.
Just to recognize its light, all-enfolding;
Just to claim its present might, all-upholding.
Just to know it as thine own, that no power can take away;
Is not this enough alone for the gladness of the day?

Just to trust, and yet to ask guidance still;
Take the training or the task, as he will.
Just to take the loss or gain, as he sends it;
Just to take the joy or pain, as he lends it.
He who formed thee for his praise will not miss the gracious aim;
So, today, and all thy days, shall be molded for the same.

Just to leave in his dear hand little things,
All we cannot understand, all that stings.
Just to let him take the care sorely pressing;
Finding all we let him bear changed to blessing.
This is all! and yet the way marked by him who loves thee best;
Secret of a happy day, secret of his promised rest.

—Frances Ridley Havergal.

ENOCH, ELIJAH AND THE SENTENCE

The answer to the following query may interest others than the inquirer:—

"Since 'death passed upon all men,' because of Adam's sin; and since all had to be *redeemed* before they could escape from that death sentence, how came it that Enoch and Elijah escaped from it before the redemption-price was paid?"

We answer, that they did not escape, but were still under the sentence of death until the ransom was paid. The *execution* of the sentence of death was deferred in their cases, and their lives prolonged; but they would eventually have died had they not been redeemed. After father Adam was sentenced he lived nearly a thousand years, but under his particular sentence he could not have lived more than a thousand years; because the sentence read, "In *the day* that thou eatest thereof, dying thou shalt die." And since "a day with the Lord is as a thousand years" (2 Pet. 3:8), his death was fixed to take place within that "day." But God left the way open to make types of Enoch and Elijah, and hence, so far as they and the remainder of the human family were concerned, no limit of time for the execution of the sentence was fixed. If, therefore, it pleased God to have it so, they might have continued to live for thousands of years, under the death sentence, without dying. In Elijah's case, altho he was translated, it is not said that he did not die afterward. His translation made a type, as we have seen (MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II, Chapter viii), and he may have died and been buried afterward, unknown to men, as was Moses.—Deut. 34.6.

But with Enoch the case was different, as we are expressly told that he did not die. In his case, therefore, it is evident that the execution of the sentence was deferred, but there is no evidence that it was annulled. He, therefore, remained under that sentence of death until he was *ransomed* by our Lord's death. As a member of the fallen race, he was an imperfect man, and altho redeemed, and altho a restitution to human perfection is provided for him in the divine plan, we are not certain that he is *yet* a perfect man. For the Apostle seems to teach that none of those whose faithfulness was attested before the Gospel call was made will be *made perfect* until after Christ and his bride are made perfect. He says (Heb. 11:39, 40), after enumerating many of the ancient worthies, Enoch included, verse 5, "These all, having obtained witness through faith, received not the promise [everlasting life, etc.], God having provided some better thing [priority of time as well as of honor and position] for us [the Gospel church], that they [the ancient worthies] without us [apart from us] should not be MADE PERFECT." And since the church, the body of Christ, has not yet been perfected in glory, it is but a reasonable inference that wherever Enoch is and however happy and comfortable he may be, he is not yet made a perfect man, and will not be until all the members of the body of Christ have been made perfect in the divine nature.

As to *where* God took Enoch, we may not know, since God has not revealed that. Should we speculate as to whether God took him to some other world, and for what purpose, it would be but an idle speculation. We may not be wise above what is written. We may be certain, however, that Enoch did not go to heaven—the *spiritual* state or condition—for such is the record: "*No man* hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven—even the Son of Man." (John 3:13) Elijah is said to have ascended to heaven; but, from our Lord's statement above quoted, that must be understood to refer to the *air*—as, when it is said that "the fowl fly in the midst of heaven:" it certainly cannot refer to the *heavenly condition*, which flesh and blood cannot enter nor even see without a change of nature, which change has been promised only to the Gospel church.

Understanding, as above shown, that Enoch was preserved from actual dissolution in death—altho, already under that sentence, legally dead (Rom. 5:12; Matt. 8:22) until the ransom-price for all was paid by our Lord's death—we can see that there will now be no necessity for his dissolution, but that when the due time shall have come he may be fully and completely *restored* from even the measures of human imperfection he had inherited to full, perfect manhood.

So, too, it will be with those of the world who will be living when the "times of restitution" are fully ushered in: it will not be necessary for them to go into the tomb. For altho they are already legally dead, in that condemnation (or sentence) to "death passed upon all men," yet their penalty has also been legally met by another, Christ. He now holds the *judgment* against all, but graciously offers to cancel it entirely for each one who will accept restitution to life and perfection on the conditions of the New Covenant.

As during this Gospel age the church, altho once, under sentence, they were *dead* in trespasses and sins, are *reckoned* as freed from condemnation, as justified, and as having passed from death unto life when they accept Christ's merit under the *New Covenant, so it will be in the Millennial age with those of the world who, upon learning it, accept God's offer of life. They also will be *reckoned* as having passed from death unto life—as tho they had been utterly dead and then been awakened. So complete is the *reckoning* that those who then sin wilfully, and forfeit their reckoned life, die the second death, altho they all may not actually have died before. And indeed so too it is now with the Gospel church—if after we, through faith in Christ, are reckoned as no longer dead, but alive toward God through Jesus Christ, we were to sin wilfully, intentionally, we would thus bring upon ourselves *again* (a *second* time) the full penalty of sin, *death*, and this would be the second death.

But while there are such similarities between the Lord's methods now and in the next age for justification of life, or passing from death unto life *reckonedly*, there are very different arrangements for the two ages for the *actual* passing out of death into life, when the trial of each is finished. The church of the Gospel age walks by faith entirely, and not by sight. Her trial occurs before the actual *setting up* of the kingdom, and hence each one as he finishes his course, must *wait* for the crown of life. They "all die *like men*," and the world recognizes no difference. But while they actually die the same as other men, God keeps up the *reckoned* difference between those who have accepted his offer of life and become his children and others who have not done so. Hence in Scripture believers are not said to be dead, but to be sleeping until the "morning," when according to God's prearranged plan, such shall have actually and in full measure the *life* now *reckoned* as theirs under God's covenant in Christ. Thus our Lord spoke of Lazarus and others as sleeping, and the apostles' writings refer to "those who sleep in Jesus." And

* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants.

the Scriptures, throughout, preserve the same sentiment, saying,—"Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning;" "I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness," etc. The only exceptions to this "sleeping" are particularly mentioned by the Apostle, when he says, "We shall not all sleep, altho we must all be changed." Those living in the time when our Lord *begins* to take his great power and reign, altho they all must die, because consecrated *even unto death*, yet they will not "sleep," their "change" to spirit-being coming in the moment of dying. And in this blessed time (according to the evidence presented in MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vols. 2 and 3) we believe we have been living since April, 1878 A. D. What a blessing this is we find stated by our Lord,—"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord *from henceforth*—yea, saith the spirit, they rest from their labors [from weariness, but their works follow with them."—Rev. 14:13.

But during the Millennial age it will be somewhat different. Those who accept the New Covenant will no more get the perfect life instantly than we do now. They will get it at the end of the Millennial age, as we get it at the end of the Gospel age. Yet not just the same; for the Gospel church, as we have seen, has waited in the sleep of death for the close of the age and the reward of the perfect life, while the faithful of the Millennial age, instead of dying, will gradually improve in health—mental, moral and physical—until perfection will be reached by all such, at the close of the Millennial age. Meantime, those who sin wilfully against full light and full ability will be accounted to have committed the sin unto death; and death to such, even if born in the Millennium, will be the *second* death.

IF YE DO THESE THINGS

"For if yet do these things, ye shall never fail; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."—2 Pet. 1:10, 11.

This statement of the Apostle Peter is suggestive of several important thoughts: (1) It indicates the possibility to the class addressed of "an abundant entrance into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." This is the prize of the high calling of the overcoming saints of the Gospel age. True, when we consider its exceeding glory, faith is prone to stagger at the promise that, poor and imperfect though we be, God proposes in the ages to come to show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. (Eph. 2:7.) Nevertheless, such is the case: "unto us are given the exceeding great and precious promises, that by these we might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust"—through the worldly desires, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life."—2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 2:16.

These exceeding great and precious promises contemplate the adoption of these called ones by the great Sovereign of the whole universe as his sons and heirs; as joint-heirs with his only begotten Son, the heir of all things: they shall be with him where he is and behold his glory; and they shall put off this mortality, and, like him, who is "the express image of the Father's person," they shall be clothed with immortality. So shall they be forever with the Lord, and see him as he is; for they shall be like him. Having overcome the world, they shall sit with him in his kingdom, even as he overcame and sat down with the Father in his kingdom.—Rev. 3:21.

"Fear not, little flock," says the prospective Bridegroom of the church, "for it is your Father's *good pleasure* to give you the kingdom," "for the Father himself loveth you, because ye have loved me and have believed that I came out from God." Nor will he give the kingdom to his beloved grudingly; for Peter says, "an entrance shall be ministered unto you *abundantly*:" there will be a glorious welcome, a joyous greeting and a coronation jubilee among all the heavenly hosts when the laurels of victory are placed upon the heads of all the overcoming soldiers of the cross, the heroes who nobly fought the good fight of faith—who kept the faith, fought the fight against the world, the flesh and the devil, and finished their course in faithfulness even unto death.

All this abundance of grace and glory is the possible inheritance of even the weakest saint who, trusting not to his own ability to make his calling and election sure, humbly looks to God for strength from day to day to endure hardness as a good soldier. If any man attempts to do this in his own strength, he must surely fail; for the *fiery trial* that is to try *every one* will prove too much for the mind of the flesh; but God who worketh in the consecrated to will and to do his good pleasure, will so fortify and equip those who depend upon his grace, that, with the Psalmist, they can say, "It is God that girdeth me with strength. . . . By thee I have run through a troop, and by my God have I leaped over a wall;" and with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ, who strengtheneth me."—Psa. 18:32, 29; Phil. 4:13.

(1) Let us not fear, then, to lay hold upon the exceeding great and precious promises when we are so fully assured that he who has begun the good work in us will finish it, if we let him. (Phil. 1:6) "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith"—not faith in ourselves; for we can have no confidence in the flesh. The poor, weak and faltering flesh does not warrant us in reposing confidence in its ability for the great responsibilities of soldiers of the cross. We must draw our supplies of wisdom and strength from above: they are not within us except as implanted there by the Spirit of God.

(2) We next notice that while Peter's words encouragingly indicate the possibility of the glorious inheritance to all who are called, there is also the implied possibility of failure to enter into it. There is an *"if," a contingency,* upon which the scales of divine judgment as to our worthiness or unworthiness of the inheritance must turn. And it is in view of this contingency that Paul urges all the called ones to great sobriety of mind and carefulness of conduct, saying, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall;" and again, "Let us therefore fear lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it." It is not enough, therefore, that we have *consecrated* ourselves to God as living sacrifices; that we have *covenanted* to follow in the footsteps of Jesus; for the consecration, the covenant, the promise, will avail nothing if we prove unfaithful to it, except to rise up in judgment against us. "Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay."—Eccl. 5:4, 5. See also Deut. 23:21 23; Prov. 20:25; Heb. 10:38, 39; Psa. 15; Luke 9:62; John 15:6; Acts 5:4, 5.

(3) Our attention is next drawn to what is implied in this expressed contingency—"If ye *do these things.*" What things?—The reference is to the things mentioned in the preceding verses; *viz.*, that with all diligence we add to our faith fortitude; and to fortitude knowledge; and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness love."

It is important to observe here that while all of these virtues are imperative requirements of those who would be esteemed of God as faithful, they are only of value as they are added to, or built upon, a foundation of faith—"Giving all diligence *add to your faith,*"—your "precious faith," as described in verse 1. This faith is our abiding confidence in the divine plan of salvation, which centers in the redemption accomplished through the precious blood of Christ, who freely gave himself a ransom for all. No righteousness of our own without this foundation of faith can avail anything to commend us to God. All our works of righteousness must be built upon this faith.

But is not faith in Christ sufficient unto salvation without the subsequent *doing* of anything? To this the Scriptures plainly answer that a faith that Christ will save us in our sins—while we still love sin and do the works of sin—is a misplaced faith; for Christ never proposed to save us *in* our sins, but *from* our sins; and God is faithful to forgive sins and to cleanse from all unrighteousness those who come unto him by Christ,—through faith in his shed blood (sacrificed life) as the propitiation or satisfaction for our sins—and in his cleansing power. "He that saith, I know him [Christ, as my Lord and Saviour], and keepeth not his commandments [to *do* the works of righteousness, and to bring forth the fruits of repentance of sins], *is a liar,*" says the Apostle John, "and *the truth is not in him.*" (1 John 2:4) Therefore the Apostle Paul also exhorts believers, saying: "Beloved, *work out* your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and do of his good pleasure."—Phil. 2:12, 13.

It was God that provided for us the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, and it is God that has drawn us unto himself and that has promised us all needed grace to walk in the paths of righteousness; and more, even to follow in the footprints of Jesus in the way of self-sacrifice. While, therefore, with fear and trembling,—with great *carefulness*—we endeavor to work out our salvation, it is our privilege always to realize the promised grace to help in every time of need, and to be confident that our best *efforts* toward righteousness are ac-

ceptable to God when presented through the merit of the righteousness of Christ, imputed to us by faith.

Having this foundation, then, and "having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust"—through the desires of the flesh—and having by faith laid hold also on the "exceeding great and precious promises" of being made partakers of the divine nature and joint-heirs with Christ of his kingdom and glory, and being anxious to make our "calling and election sure," let us consider these *additions* to our faith, which, if possessed and continuously cultivated, are the assurance that we shall never fall, and that an abundant entrance into the kingdom shall be granted to us.

The first addition (*virtue*) is *fortitude* or strength of character in righteousness. This implies the cultivation of the strictest integrity in our dealings, both with God and with our fellow men,—scrupulous honesty, justice and truth being the only standard. The Psalmist clearly defines it thus, saying, "He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth *in his heart*. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor; in whose eyes a vile person is condemned; but he honoreth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not [*i. e.*, who will not violate a contract found to be unfavorable to him.] He that putteth not out his money to usury [taking unjust advantage of the necessities of others], nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved." (Psa. 15) Such a one is a virtuous man, a man of fortified or strong character.

The second addition is *knowledge*—the knowledge of God and of his righteous will concerning us (revealed through his Word, by the holy Spirit). Neglect of this divinely appointed means of knowledge is equivalent to setting up our own imperfect standard of righteousness and ignoring the divine standard. It is therefore important that we give all diligence to the study of the divine oracles that we may be fortified in faith and works accordingly.

The third addition, *self-control*, is one of the most important elements of good character. He that ruleth his own spirit is greater than he that taketh a city, is the counsel of the wise man; and many a victorious general has yet to learn to conquer and control himself. Self-control has to do with all our sentiments, thoughts, tastes, appetites, labors, pleasures, sorrows and hopes. Its cultivation, therefore, means a high order of character-development. Self-control, accompanied by faith, fortitude, knowledge from on high, implies increased zeal and activity in divine things and increased moderation in earthly things, in judgment, in conduct, in the regulation of temporal affairs, etc. "Let your moderation be known unto all men."

The fourth addition is *patience*. Time is a very necessary element in the process of perfecting every good thing. The fruit hastily plucked is the unripe, hard, sour, bitter fruit. Time, as well as pruning and fertilizing and cultivating and shower and sunshine, is necessary to the ripe and luscious fruitage that delights the taste. So it is also with the fruitage of plans and purposes, of education and of grace. God's deep designs work out slowly, not only in his great universal government, but also in the hearts and minds of his intelligent creatures. God is operating all things according to his own will along the lines of the fixed principles of his wise and righteous laws—physical, moral and intellectual. To be impatient in any case is foolishly to insist upon having the unripe, hasty, sour, bitter fruitage, which, if the Lord grant it, will prove a sickening penalty for the impatience that demanded it. "Let patience have her perfect work," wait God's time: "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." Wait the Lord's time and way and the indications of his will in every case, both with regard to ourselves and others and "they that put their trust in him shall never be confounded."

Faith, fortitude and knowledge prepare God's people to have patience with every effort toward good, however weak,—patience with the poor, blinded world, with the "babes in Christ," with the slow and stupid, with the excitable and blundering, with the over-confident Peters and the skeptical Thomases. But to have patience or fellowship with the "unfruitful works of darkness" and sin, is the perversion of this grace; for these, wherever found, should be promptly and sharply reproved and rebuked according to their *evil intent;* with patience, nevertheless, toward the repentant prodigals, and always with meekness.

It is noticeable that the Lord seems to forewarn his people of great need of patience in the "harvest" or end of this age: patience toward fellow-men, and patience in the warfare against evil, and in waiting for the Lord's time and method of setting right the wrongs of "the present world." The poor world, lacking faith, fortitude, knowledge of the divine plan and patience will fall a ready prey to unrest and anarchy in the near future. The Word of the Lord to his people is,—"*Ye* have need of patience."

The fifth addition is *godliness*, god-likeness, piety,—that devout, controling reverence for God which yields a hearty, cheerful, loving conformity to his will—fervency of spirit in serving the Lord. This is a later development and vital element in the Christian character. Piety, godliness, springs spontaneously from appreciative and grateful hearts, whose delight is in the law of the Lord, in meditation upon his precepts and promises, and in secret communion with God in prayer and praise. Loving, cheerful activity must result from such an inner life; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh, and the whole being is quickened to new life. Only those who have a living faith in God, and who are fortifying their characters against evil and growing in knowledge and self-control and patience are prepared to appreciate the grandeur of the divine character; and only such are really energized by a desire for God-likeness.

The sixth addition is *brotherly kindness*, which of necessity grows out of godliness. As god-like-ness presupposes the other graces mentioned, so its development implies an appreciation of divine justice and beneficence, and will broaden and deepen our sentiments toward all the well-disposed, however imperfect, and especially will it enlarge our hearts to all who are of the household of faith—"the brethren."

The seventh addition is charity, *love*,—the bond of perfectness which unites all the other graces, and as a name stands for them all.

Love to God alone is not the full manifestation of this grace; nor can there be, according to the teachings of God's Word, a sincere love for God, without a corresponding love to man: "If a man say, I love God," says the Apostle John, "and hateth his brother, *he is a liar*, for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" (1 John 4:20) And Jesus said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, *if ye have love one to another.*"—John 13:35.

It is the abounding of these graces of character *added to* our faith in Christ as our Redeemer and Saviour that insures the soul against the possibility of falling: "If ye do these things, *ye shall never fall.*" The contingency is not in the doing of these things *perfectly*, and regardless of the righteousness of Christ to cover our trangressions and compensate for our daily shortcomings; but if, *added to* our faith in the imputed righteousness of Christ, we have cultivated all these graces *to the extent of our ability*, we shall not fall. When we have done all that we can do, we are still unprofitable servants, not daring to trust in our own righteousness, but in the ample robe which is ours by faith in Christ, while, with consistent "diligence," we work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that the righteousness of Christ is only applied to such as desire to forsake sin and to pursue that "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord."—Heb. 12:14.

"BECAUSE JESUS WAS NOT YET GLORIFIED"

A reader inquires for the evidence that our Lord Jesus has *yet been glorified* as we have taught in MILLENNIAL DAWN. He says, "From the Song of Solomon (2:10) and other places I gather the thought that he (our Beloved) is just as anxious for the marriage as we (the church) are;" and quotes from Rom. 8:17 and Col. 3:4 "glorified *together*," as proof that our Lord Jesus will not be glorified until the church is completed and glorified. He refers to Heb. 1:6,—"When he bringeth again the first begotten into the world he saith—Let all the angels of God worship him," and holds that it will be fulfilled at the second advent of Christ.

We reply, that the matter is settled beyond all peradventure by the text which we use as the caption of this article,—"The holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified." So says the inspired Apostle. (John 7:39) Hence, when, about fifty days afterward (after our Lord had finished his sacrifice and had been raised from the dead by the Father's power, and had ascended up on high there to appear in the presence of God on our behalf), the holy Spirit was poured out upon the church, at Pentecost, it *became a sure indication* that at that time our Lord had been *glorified.* Notice this point distinctly. If the holy Spirit was not given before, *because* Jesus was not yet glorified, it PROVES that when it was given, a little later, *he had been glorified.*

Come now, and see the picture of his own glorification, given to us by our Lord, through his servant John. (Rev. 1:1) It is recorded in Rev. 5. He that sits upon the throne is Jehovah. The scroll in his right hand is his plan for human redemption, sealed from all until the one "worthy" to carry out to completion its details should be found and proved "worthy." The inquiry, "Who is worthy to open the book [scroll] and to loose the seals thereof?" had long been made: for four thousand years, from the giving of the promise that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head, it had been the query—Who shall be esteemed, by Jehovah God, to be worthy to perform his gracious purposes, and thus be honored above all others as the Servant (messenger) of the New Covenant of grace?

When silence prevailed, and none was found worthy either in heaven or on earth (representing the condition of things prior to the first advent), John began to weep, saying to himself: Alas! tho God has some gracious and wise plans for the welfare of his creatures, we may never know them, because none is found worthy to know or to execute them. So it was that even our Lord Jesus, prior to the finishing of his sacrifice, as he then declared, did not know all about the Father's plans, and times, and seasons.—Mark 13:32.

But John's tears were soon dried, when the angel declared, "Weep not, for the Lion of the tribe of Judah hath *prevailed* [hath overcome, so as to be accepted and declared worthy] to open the scroll and to loose the seals thereof." We know well who is meant; and the further unfolding of the panoramic vision leaves no doubt. Jesus our Lord is symbolized by a slain lamb restored to life, and to him was given the wonderful scroll which represents the divine plans, with authority and power to accomplish them all. *Then* (after his resurrection and ascension to the right hand of the Father) he was glorified and received a name above every name; *then* all the angels of God worshiped him; *then* their thousands of thousands and myriads of myriads sang a new song, saying, "Thou art worthy to take the scroll and to loose the seals; because thou was slain, and didst redeem* unto God with thy blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation." "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive the power, and wealth, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory and blessing." And when to him was thus given a name above every name, all the holy ones bowed and offered sweet incense of prayer and homage; because God had honored him by delivering to him the scroll of wisdom, and the power and authority to execute all of its provisions. He is worthy; and the Apostle declares that it is now, therefore, God's will that all "should honor the Son even as they honor the Father."—Acts 5:31; Phil. 2:9-11; John 5:23.

* Oldest MS, with evident propriety, omits *us*, since the angels were not redeemed.

Since his glorification the Lamb has been breaking the seven seals and thus opening the divine plans before men and angels, and we now living are privileged to share this knowledge more abundantly than others, because, the last seal having been broken, the scroll is open to all who follow the Lamb in love and obedience and meekness; and "the mystery of God is [about] finished."—Rev. 10:7.

Further evidence on this subject is unnecessary; the testimony that our Lord was glorified, and invested with honor and power and dominion at his ascension, is overwhelming. His promise to his followers is that, as he overcame and was glorified to share the Father's throne (glory, dignity, power), even so they, if faithful, will be glorified to share his throne (glory, honor).

The sense of Heb. 1:4-6 (Diaglott) is that, when God had glorified Christ, mankind in general knew it not, but when, as God's messenger, he is again presented to men, at his second advent, it will be in full demonstration that all the angels of God (all of God's holy ones) worship, reverence and obey him. And in the expression, we shall be "glorified *together*" the word "together" does not mean simultaneously, at the same instant, but harmoniously, to share the *same* glory. In proof of this, note the context (see Diaglott); the suffering "*with* him" or "together" does not mean that we suffer at the same time, but that we share the same kind of suffering, for the same cause of faithfulness to God, and that in due time we shall be glorified "together;" *i. e.*, in the sense of sharing the same glory wherewith our Lord has already been glorified.

The glorification or instalment in honor and power should not, however, be confounded with the *change* which occurred at our Lord's resurrection; by which he was raised a spiritual being of the highest order, the divine nature. As the human body was termed a "body of humiliation," so his spirit body is termed "a glorious body." This, however, has nothing whatever to do with the glory or majesty of office to which our Lord was introduced fifty days later, when "he ascended up on high" and was received as a sharer of the Father's throne. The latter glory and majesty is shortly to be made manifest to men,—"The glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together." But they will not see the Lord's glorious person, as our Lord declared before he died,—"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more."

Likewise the church, the "overcomers," his "body," his "bride," will in their resurrection change be granted spiritual and glorious bodies (1 Cor. 15:42-44) and afterward "see him [the Lord] *as he is*" and be caused to share his glory, to sit with him in his throne.

KEEP THY TONGUE FROM EVIL

JUNE 6.—JAMES 3:1-13.

"Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile."—Psa. 34:13.

"Be not many teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment" (Revised Version.) Thus the Apostle indicates that what he has to say concerning the great influence of the tongue is directed largely to those amongst believers who attempt to be teachers; who have a greater responsibility than if they were not teachers. It is not his wish to deter those who have ability, a gift in this direction, but rather to caution all as to the responsibility of the position they thus take. If they possess an eloquent tongue it may be a channel for a great blessing, swaying large numbers to the Lord, the truth and the way of righteousness; or, on the other hand, if contaminated with error, the tongue can do almost untellable harm—injury to faith, to morals, to good works. It is indeed true, that whoever exercises the gift of teaching lays himself open to increased responsibility in the sight of God and men.—See Matt. 5:19; Rom. 2:20, 21; 1 Pet. 5:3; Titus 1:11; 1 Tim. 1:7; 2 Tim. 4:3; 2 Pet. 2:1.

The warning in this lesson is not against the tongue itself, but against the power which we exercise upon others by the use of our tongues. Probably every person of experience will fully agree with the statement that the tongue is potent in its influence beyond any other member of the body, for either good or evil. Experience teaches also that with the vast majority it is easier to control any other organ than the tongue. So skillful a servant is it that every ambition and passion and inclination of the fallen nature seeks to use it as a servant or channel for evil. It requires, therefore, on the part of the Christian, increased vigilance, wisdom and care so to govern this member of his body and bring it into subjection to the new mind in Christ, that it shall be, not a hindrance to himself or to others, but, on the contrary, a help in the narrow way. As the bit in the horse's mouth will move and control his strength, and as the small rudder to a vessel will direct or change its course, so the tongue and the pen, its representative, may influence and turn about large numbers of people, for good or ill. How important, therefore, is the tongue, and how much more frequently do we find it employed as an agency for evil than as an agency for good, to pull down the faith rather than to build up the faith, to implant seeds of discord and discontent rather than those which will produce righteousness and peace! While this is specially true in the worldly, it is true to a considerable extent amongst God's people, and each should remember that to some extent he is a teacher, and day by day is either forwarding or hindering the cause of truth, righteousness and peace.

In the unregenerate world the tongue is indeed a "fire" causing no end of burning of wrath, envy, hatred, strife and everything that defileth the entire body, stimulating all the fallen passions and desires. No wonder the Apostle declares figuratively that the tongue itself seems to be set on fire of Gehenna—the second death. Its burning not only tends to bring its master but others to destruction.

In the statement, "Therewith bless we God, even the Father, and therewith curse we men, which are made in the likeness of God," we should not understand the writer to refer to himself and to the church as using the tongues for such unholy purposes, but as speaking for the whole world, some use the tongue to praise God and some use it to blaspheme his holy name and to curse their fellow creatures. It is a willing servant in whatever direction it is guided; and hence the importance of having so important a servant and member rightly guided. Apparently, however, there were some in the church

who out of the same mouth rendered thanks to God and curses to fellow creatures—perhaps not often curses in the ordinary acceptation of the term, but curses in the sense of injurious words, which would lead to a baneful or cursed or evil condition, for every false teaching is a curse to those who receive it. In this sense of the word at least, many out of the same mouth send forth both good and evil influences. This is a wrong condition, and hence the importance of the warning, "My brethren, be not many teachers." Whoever would be a fountain from which would go forth the divine Word, carrying blessing and refreshment and strength, should see to it that bitter waters, false doctrines that would cause a curse, an injury—dishonoring God and perverting his Word—should not find in them a channel of utterance.

In the choice of leaders for meetings the "tongue" qualification, as here laid down should not be overlooked. The *fiery tongued* should not be chosen, but the meeker, the moderate, who "bridle" their tongues and endeavor carefully to "speak as the oracles of God" only. Such tongues *constrain*, while others more frequently wound and repel. The Word of the Lord is quick and powerful and *sharp* and cuts "to the heart" without bitter and acrimonious and uncharitable human expletives to enforce it. Hence the divine instruction that we "speak the truth in love."

The lesson closes with an exhortation to those who have the qualifications of teachers in the church (wisdom and knowledge) to manifest themselves not merely by words and teachings, but by godly lives, good works, in meekness of wisdom.

While this lesson is pointed specially toward "teachers," it should be regarded by all. It is an old and true saying that "Kind words can never die," and it would be equally true to say, "Unkind words never die." Indeed, the latter live much the longer in a majority of cases—in worldly hearts especially. Let us each and all redouble our energy in subjugating our tongues, that they may always bless and "minister grace to the hearers."—Read Eph. 4:29.

OUR STEWARDSHIP

"Let a man so account of us as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful."—1 Cor. 4:1, 2.

We have heretofore called attention to the fact that every member of the anointed body, the church of Christ, is anointed to preach the Gospel, the good tidings of the kingdom of peace. See our commission as recorded by Isaiah (61:1-3) and quoted by our Lord in partial application to himself, the Head of the anointed body. (Luke 4:16-21) Paul, in the above text, points to the same thing, having special reference to himself and Apollos and Cephas (Peter), and a general reference to all who are Christ's. (1 Cor. 3:21-23) He would have us each remember that we are divinely commissioned and ordained ministers (servants) of Christ, as Jesus also taught, saying to all who are branches in the true vine,—"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." (John 15:16) He also said, "Ye are the light of the world" and "the salt of the earth."

The presence of this anointed body in the world is therefore for a purpose, a benevolent purpose toward, and in the interest of, the world, even in the present life, tho their great and most successful ministry will be in the age to come, when exalted to power and great glory as kings and priests unto God. Tho the world at present knows not God and is not subject to the law of God, nevertheless, God in his abounding grace so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son to redeem them, and by and by, under the righteous reign of his Millennial kingdom, he will restore and bless them, and the good news of this redemption and the coming kingdom he would have testified to them even now, as he says, "This Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations, and then shall the end [of this age] come" (Matt. 24:14); and in the coming age the fruit of this testimony will appear. The same testimony also serves the further ordained purpose of gathering out of the world a people for his name (Acts 15:14), to be associated with Christ in the great work of the kingdom, of restoring "all things" and blessing "all the families of the earth." Being anointed with the holy Spirit, and ordained as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God, it is not merely our mission to live harmless lives—simply to abstain from violence, dishonesty, slander, etc.—so that men can say of us that we never abused or cheated or illused them. This negative goodness is, of course, one side of a righteous character, and one without which no man is righteous; but more, much more, than this is required of a steward of God. There must be a positive, as well as a negative, goodness. This we find exemplified in the case of our Lord Jesus, who was not only "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners," but who also "went about *doing good*" and was abundant in good works. —Acts 10:38; 2:22.

It is this positive element of character and the recognized obligation to activity that are specially implied in the term "steward" while the appointment by the Lord to such an office is also a recognition by him of those elements of a righteous character without which no one is eligible to the office. A steward, therefore, is not a person of merely harmless character, or one who is contented carefully to fold away in a napkin the talents entrusted to his care, so that the Lord, on his return, may find his own just as he left it, but he is one who makes a diligent and business like appropriation of his one or many talents in the Master's service, so that, at the time of reckoning, the Lord may not only find his own, but also as large an increase as possible, in evidence of the zeal and faithfulness of his appointed steward in respect to that which was entrusted to him.

The Apostle also says, "Moreover, it is *required* in stewards that a man be found faithful. Thus we see that the entire body of Christ is called, not to indolent, self-complacent ease, but to diligent and enterprising activity; and not in the spirit or a hireling, with eye-service as man pleasers, but with the intelligent, loving interest and zeal of sons and heirs of God, of ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. It is indeed "*required*" of stewards to be thus active in the divine service, and the Lord will not count us faithful if we simply *be* good and make little or no effort to *do* good; and even he who has only one talent is not excusable in folding that one talent away in a napkin, or in hiding it in the earth. (Matt. 25:24-28; Luke 19:20-24) It is, therefore, most important for every one to consider what are his talents, how they are employed, and whether his course of service is day by day approved of God as faithful.

In thus endeavoring to view ourselves as God views us, it is important that we remember that not only the great talents, such as large ability, mental or physical, large opportunities of time and circumstance, or command of means, are noted by the Lord, but also that the small things are never overlooked by him. Call to mind the Lord's teaching that even a cup of cold water given to a disciple because he is a disciple shall not lose its reward; that the poor widow's two mites were more highly esteemed than the larger offerings of the rich; and when we thus perceive that the Lord is judging according to the thoughts and intents of the heart, the humblest saint can see ample opportunities to prove himself a faithful steward.

This also calls to mind the statement of the Apostle Paul (1 Cor. 12:22, 17-19), "Those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary." How true! As in the illustration, by far the larger proportion of the members are such; and their office in the body is just as necessary as that of the more notable members, for, "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members, every one of them, in the body, *as it hath pleased him*. And if they were all one member, where were the body?"

What a blessed thought to every one who realizes himself a member of the body of Christ, that he has a place and an office in the body to which God himself has wisely appointed him, and that that place and office belong to no one else. It may now seem a humble place, but it is nevertheless an important, a necessary place; and in filling that place as a wise and faithful steward he is approved of God, and by and by will be exalted to his kingdom and glory.

We know of some of these dear saints in the obscure places of the Lord's vineyard, quietly and lovingly doing with their might what their hands or heads or hearts find to do, and doing it so bravely, so nobly and so well; and yet in their humility they are apparently all unconscious of the halo of that beauty of holiness they are shedding around them to the honor of him whose name they bear. Praise God for all these evidences of his grace and these fruits of his training and discipline! They are lights in dark places, tho generally, as in the case of our Lord, the darkness comprehends it not. Yet, nevertheless, there is produced by these lights an effect which men feel and which God will not overlook.

M. F. RUSSELL.

THE CONFERENCE AT JERUSALEM

——May 23.—Acts 15: 1-6, 22-29——

"Through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they."—Acts 15:11.

Circumcision was given to Abraham and his posterity as a sign or mark by which they attested faith in the divine promises. It was obligatory upon every Jew who would maintain his relationship to the divine promises, and it is still obligatory upon that nation. (Gen. 17:14) We are not to forget, however, that a Jew, no less than a Gentile, is reckoned as losing earthly nationality in becoming a Christian. To all such, "old things pass away, all things become new." They are thenceforth "new creatures" in Christ Jesus, members of the "holy nation."

Inasmuch as circumcision in the flesh as a mark in the flesh had been observed for over eighteen centuries by all recognized as God's people, it should not surprise us to find that some of the early Christians, previously Jews, concluded that it was still obligatory upon all who had become children of God. All the broad distinctions between the Law Covenant and the New Covenant were not clearly distinguished at first,—even the apostles appear for a time not to have distinguished clearly on all points. Nevertheless, the Lord had held them, as the special guides of the new dispensation, and had prevented their making declaration on the subject, until in his due time the matter was brought clearly to their attention; and then they were guided aright.

The Apostle Paul seems to have been the first to get a broadly comprehensive view of the lengths and breadths and heights and depths of the *New Covenant provisions; and we are not to forget that he was probably helped miraculously to this clearness of perception by being granted "visions and revelations" more than all the others. Barnabas, his companion in his missionary tour, was naturally the first to share this knowledge, and was evidently in full sympathy with the Apostle Paul in resisting the teachings of certain Jews who attempted to Judaize the erstwhile Gentiles who chiefly constituted the Antioch church. That the church was in good spiritual health is evidenced by the fact that they were anxious to have the truth, whatever it might be. Accordingly they requested that Paul and Barnabas and certain of their company might consult with the apostles and elders at Jerusalem respecting the propriety of circumcision and the general observance of the Mosiac law on the part of those who were not Israelites by birth. And this plan was followed.

It was now nearly twenty years since our Lord's resurrection; and as a result of the efforts put forth by believers, Christians were now to be found in little groups throughout Asia-Minor and Syria. The brethren made use of the journey to Jerusalem as an opportunity to refresh the hearts of God's people in the various cities enroute, and these fellow Christians in turn gladly entertained them as members of the Lord's body;—setting a good example of hospitality.

Arrived at Jerusalem, they were warmly welcomed by the apostles and friends of the truth who had heard much concerning their missionary journey and its good results. Evidently, before they got to a statement of the real object of their visit, a class similar to those who had gone down to Antioch took exceptions to the method which the brethren had used amongst the Gentiles. They probably inquired, Were all the believing Gentiles whom you evangelized commanded to be circumcised, and instructed that they should keep the law of Moses? This opened up the question at once, and led to the announcement that the settlement of this question was the very object of their visit. Accordingly a council of the apostles and elders was called.

Verses 7-21 give probably but a small portion of the discussion. It would seem that the question, What is the responsibility of converts amongst the Gentiles toward the law of Moses? had never come up for consideration previously, and the apostles, it would appear, were without very positive convictions until they began to discuss the subject. Peter, one of the oldest of the disciples, and a man of strong character, pointed out that God had made choice of him as the one who should be first to open the Gospel door to the Gentiles; how Cornelius was the first of these converts, and how God poured out the holy Spirit upon him and thus recognized him as a son and joint-heir with Christ, while as yet he was uncircumcized, thus proving that circumcision was not essential to divine reconciliation and sonship in the household of faith under the New Covenant. He doubtless also called attention to the fact that our Lord, who instructed them to teach all nations and to baptize those who believed, gave no instructions in reference to circumcision or any of the commands of the Mosaic law. He argued, therefore, that they had no right to put upon the Gentiles, as a yoke of bondage, the law of Moses, which God had not put upon them, but only upon the Jews, and which the Jews found it impossible to bear, and from which they (believing Jews) had to be liberated through the merit of Christ.

Then Paul and Barnabas told how God had greatly blessed their ministry amongst the Gentiles, performing many miracles, etc., and in every way attesting his blessing upon their work; and yet that work had nothing in it respecting obligation to Moses' law or God's command to Abraham and his seed—circumcision.

James, our Lord's brother, was the president or chairman of the meeting, and after hearing the foregoing coincided with Peter, Paul and Barnabas, adding to the argument by citing from the prophets evidences (1) that the Gentiles would be received into divine favor and (2) that the reception of the Gentiles was not to make them Jews, but that, on the contrary, God had certain blessed provisions for the Jews to be fulfilled subsequently,—"*After this*, I will return and build again the tabernacle of David which is *fallen down*." Since Israel is to be recognized in the future by the Lord as distinct from the Gentiles, it follows that the particular national mark which distinguishes Jews from Gentiles was not to be abolished—was not to be made general amongst Gentiles, even after they believed and became God's people.

The results of the conference were satisfactory to all present, and it was decided to send a statement of the results to the Antioch church, both by writing and orally by Judas and Silas.

Probably only the substance of the letter is given in the brief recorded statement; but it is sufficient to show clearly that those who claim that the apostles were confused upon the subject so as almost to make a split in the church, are greatly mistaken, for in so many words they positively declare that those who went out from them and troubled the church at Antioch, almost unsettling their faith and peace with the statement, "Ye must be circumcised and keep the law," were not representatives of the apostles, and had received no such commandment or teaching from them. It is refreshing and strengthening to our faith to note that the Lord's promise, specially to bless and use the apostles and keep them from error in their teaching, was remarkably fulfilled, as in this case. Our Lord's words to them were, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven; in other words, I will so particularly direct you that you will make no mistakes in respect to what you will command and in respect to what you will forbid.

The statement, "It seemed good to the holy Spirit and to us," should not be lightly supposed to signify that the apostles "guessed at" the mind of the spirit, nor that they put their own judgment on a par with that of the holy Spirit. We are to remember that they had special gifts of the spirit which guided them into the understanding of the Lord's will and they merely assert here that not only was it the guidance of the holy Spirit, but that they themselves were so in sympathy that they rejoiced that the holy Spirit had not put the bondage of the law upon the Gentile converts.

The Christians at Antioch were already well instructed concerning the terms of the New Covenant, faith and the various added virtues and graces presented to us in the Pauline epistles. Such matters were not entered into by the council at Jerusalem nor referred to in the letter which they wrote in reply. The inquiry was merely respecting the obligation of the converts to be circumcised and keep the other features of the Mosaic law. The answer ignored every feature of that law, except four points; and the first three of these were mentioned no doubt as a basis of common fellowship between those who had been Jews and those who had been Gentiles, namely, (1) abstaining from meats that had been offered in sacrifice to idols; (2) abstaining from animal food that had not been killed after the manner of the Jews; (3) abstaining from the eating of blood. It would be almost impossible for those who had been reared as Jews to ignore these three points, and if the converts from the Gentiles did not observe them it would be a constant barrier to their social intercourse. Furthermore, the observance of the first restriction would be a benefit to those who were coming out of Gentile darkness, in that it would break them off from old customs which might be injurious. It was the custom among Gentiles at that time that much of the meat sold in their markets should first be offered in sacrifice to some idol. The Apostle Paul shows, however (1 Cor. 8:4), that, as an idol is nothing, the offering of the meat in the presence of nothing could do no harm to those who were able to understand the situation aright; but to others it might seem like sacrilege. He therefore advised the church to abstain from eating meat offered

* See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants.

to idols, lest it should make a brother to offend. The restriction as to the method of killing animals was that it should not be by strangulation, which would leave the blood in the veins, but by the Jewish method of bleeding them to death, which extracts the blood. Abstinence from the eating of blood in any form has probably also a sanitary reason back of it, in addition to a typical significance; for "the life is in the blood."

The mention of fornication was probably considered wise, for altho it should be understood as part of the law of Christ, yet, nevertheless, since this evil was very common at that time amongst the Gentiles and in some cases even a part of their religious service, it was thought well to specify it.

THE FAITH THAT WORKS

MAY 30.—JAMES 2:14-23.

"I will show thee my faith by my works."—James 2:18.

Many have supposed a conflict of opinion as between the Apostle Paul's teachings and the teachings of James respecting faith and works. We hold however, that, rightly understood, their teachings are in fullest accord. The Jewish Law Covenant was emphatically a covenant of *works*, while the basis of acceptance under the *New Covenant is *faith*. The law said, *Do* and live; the Gospel says, *Believe* and live.

The Apostle Paul, writing to those who knew the law and who had been trained under it to expect everlasting life as a reward of faithful performance of the requirements of that law, was obliged to show that absolute obedience to that law is an impossibility as respects the fallen race of Adam; and hence that "by the deed of the law shall no flesh be justified in his [God's] sight." If, then, justification and eternal life could not be obtained by any through the works of the law, how could they be obtained? The Apostle proceeds to show that our Lord Jesus has kept the entire law blamelessly, that he thus had secured all the rewards promised to "him that doeth these things;" namely, everlasting life and all the divine blessings. The Apostle further shows that, while none can hope for eternal life through keeping the law, they may hope for it and obtain it in another way—not by doing works that would be approved under the Law Covenant, but by having a faith which would approve them under the New Covenant, and secure to them such measure of the covering of Christ's righteousness as might be necessary to compensate for all the deficiencies and imperfections of their natures which hindered them from performing the full demands of the law. Thus he tells us: "The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit."

The Apostle Paul did not for a moment mean to say that a mere intellectual assent was sufficient. His teachings are in fullest accord with James' statement in this lesson, that a faith that produced no efforts or works toward righteousness would be a dead and valueless faith—or worse, a condemning faith.

Nor should James here be understood to ignore faith, and to teach that works of the law would be able or sufficient to justify sinners or make them heirs of eternal life. It is probable that some in the early church, having come to realize that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and that we are "justified by faith in his blood," went to the opposite extreme, as some do today, claiming that the conduct of life is immaterial, if only the faith be maintained. It is probable that James had this class of persons in mind when writing this epistle. He therefore guards the reader on this point—not to think that a mere *belief* or *faith*, that makes no impression upon the life, and is unaccompanied by any efforts so to live as would be pleasing in God's sight, would be a faith of any vitality, or that would do any real good. That is but the kind of belief that devils have.

As an illustration, he points out that, as a blessing unaccompanied by food would not satisfy a hungry person, so faith unaccompanied by works would accomplish nothing. If the challenge were put, "Show me thy faith without thy works," it would be very difficult to answer it. How could faith be shown, except by works? On the other hand, it would be taking a very proper position to say, "I will show thee my faith by my works."

Abraham is called the father of the faithful; and of him it is written, "Abraham *believed* God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." But, as the Apostle points out, Abraham's faith was not of the kind that brought forth no fruitage of good works and obedience. On the contrary, God tested Abraham's faith, and his faith was proved an acceptable one by works of obedience; faith and works coöperated in his case, and must do so in every case, else the faith will not be acceptable.

The points to be kept clearly in mind in this lesson are (1) that no works which fallen men could do would be perfect works; consequently, none of them could be acceptable to God. (2) The Christian is acceptable to God through the exercise of faith under the terms of the New Covenant. It is this faith that counts in his acceptance, because he is unable to perform works that would be acceptable. (3) His acceptable faith must be proved by his efforts to do, so far as he may be able, the divine will. (4) Since works alone would not justify, and since faith must precede good works before they will be acceptable, and since the good works, when accepted, are not accepted on account of their own perfection, but on account of the faith which makes them acceptable, therefore it follows that it is the faith that justifies us where works could not justify us, and that the works do not set aside faith, but merely attest the genuineness of the faith.

There is a grand lesson here for all who desire to please God. It is our faith that is pleasing to him—we at first having nothing else; but if the faith remains alone, without effort to produce fruits of righteousness in the life, it becomes a dead, a putrid thing, offensive to both God and man. He whose life is one of self-gratification and sin dishonors and injures any faith which he professes. Further, it is our experience that whoever fails to live in harmony with his faith will not be permitted to maintain it very long. It is to such as have some faith without corresponding efforts toward good works that the Lord sends "strong delusions that they may believe a lie."—2 Thes. 2:11.

Let us remember that the Lord's people are "living epistles known and read of all men;" that it is the works that are read rather than the faith, and hence the importance of the Golden Text, which should more and more be the sentiment of every follower of Christ,—"*I will show thee my faith by my works.*"

*See June 15, 1919, issue for critical examination of Covenants.

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"RAIMENT WHITE AND CLEAN"

"They shall walk with me in white [robes]; because they are worthy. The overcomer shall thus be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name in the presence of my Father, and in the presence of his angels."

REV. 3:4, 5.

Under the symbol of white raiment the Lord throughout his Word represents the righteousness of those whom he accepts as his people. Their righteousness in the future state will be personal righteousness or holiness; and the guarantee of this is the promise that all who are accounted worthy, as "overcomers" of the world to be joint-heirs with Christ in the heavenly kingdom, will in the resurrection be granted new, perfect, spiritual bodies, free from sin and impurity of every kind, and fully in harmony with their new wills or characters developed during the trial-time of this present life. That will be a time of which the Apostle speaks, saying,—"When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away." Those who attain to that glorious condition are symbolically represented as being clothed in white linen, representing their personal purity, completeness and perfection at that time: as it is written, "to her [the bride, the victorious church] was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the *righteousness of saints*."—Rev. 19:8.

Thus, seen, the church in glory will stand arrayed in its own righteousness—the "righteousness of the saints;" but at the present time the saints have no righteousness of their own in which to present themselves at the throne of grace. As expressed by the prophet, "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags." The very best of humanity, it must be confessed, are so imperfect in thoughts, words, and deeds as to be wholly unfit for a share in God's kingdom or for any notice or favors at his hands. However, human necessities only

made manifest the riches of divine grace and wisdom. It was for this reason, because we were all defiled through sin, and unfit to approach into the divine presence, that God graciously provided, through the sacrifice of his Son, our Lord, a spotless robe of imputed righteousness, for all those who accept of him and the covenant of divine grace sealed with his precious blood. When by repentance and faith we desire to forsake sin and approach God, we are, by reason of obedient faith in the sacrifice, reckoned as covered before the divine eyes with the merit of him who "bought us with his own precious blood," which merit is symbolically represented as a linen garment, *Christ's righteousness*, instead of the filthy rags of our own righteousness. While covered by this robe, we may by faith exercise all the privileges and opportunities, which could be ours if the robe were actually our own—instead of merely a loaned or imputed robe, the property of our Redeemer. So long as by faith we are trusting in the great sacrifice for sin, and seeking to walk worthy of the Lord, this robe is ours, to have and to enjoy; but to lose this faith would be to lose all the advantages which come with the robe, and which continue only to the wearers.

The object of the granting of these robes at the present time (not to the whole world, but only to the true believers) is that they may constitute, for those who accept them, "wedding garments," giving the wearers a right to a place at the "marriage of the King's Son." This "wedding garment" (justification) is a prerequisite to an invitation to the marriage, or rather the receipt of it is itself the invitation to enter in and become participators in the present "sufferings of Christ" and in the future "joys of our Lord." And as no one can enter in to the marriage without first having received the robe, so any one who subsequently rejects this robe of Christ's righteousness and attempts to stand before his fellows or before the King without it, will be "cast out" of all the privileges and blessings which it secures. See parable of the wedding garment.—Matt. 22:11-13.

This "wedding garment" when presented to us is clean and white, representing the absolute purity and spotlessness of our Lord's holiness; and the instruction to each one who receives the robe is "to keep his garments unspotted from the world." This command is equivalent to our Lord's injunction, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect"—a standard to which we are seeking to attain, but whose absolute attainment in an imperfect body, and surrounded by the world, the flesh and the devil, is admitted in the Scriptures and proved by experience to be impossible. But, as the robe covers all the repented-of blemishes of the past, so it likewise covers the unintentional and unwitting imperfections of the present; so that only those things to which we give more or less of mental consent are reckoned as ours—either good or evil. Thus seen, under this arrangement it is possible for the Lord's people to walk so carefully, so circumspectly (*looking all around*) at every step, as to keep his garments unspotted from the world. But alas, how few there are, if any, who have ever lived up, in all the past of their lives, to this high standard,—so that at no time in all the past, since they accepted the robe of Christ's righteousness, could it be said of them, that in no sense of the word had they ever, either outwardly or mentally, given any degree of mental consent to anything that was sinful.

Seeing that the vast majority, if not all, have at some time or other given at least a partial mental assent to sin (however regretful and repentant of the thing they may afterward have been), and seeing that any such deflection from purity of heart would constitute a stain or spot upon our robe, we inquire with great concern, Is there any possibility of having such stains or spots removed and getting the robe white again? Thank God, yes; there is a way by which the spots and wrinkles may be removed from our robe and leave it once more as white and clean as at first. The stain remover is the "precious blood." As the Apostle says, "If we confess our sins he is just to forgive us our sins and to *cleanse* us from all unrighteousness."

While all of our efforts (groaning of spirit, tears, fasting, etc.) could not remove a single stain, which the precious blood alone can remove; yet, nevertheless, it is expedient for ourselves that while realizing our Lord's forgiveness and the cleansing of the robe, we should promptly seek to discipline ourselves in repentance, fasting and tears: otherwise we may expect that while our Lord will hear our earnest prayers and cleanse our robe, he nevertheless would put upon us certain *chastisements* for our correction in righteousness and for the strengthening of our characters in respect to the points of weakness. The Apostle teaches thus, when he says, "If we would judge [correct, chastise] ourselves, then we should not be judged [corrected, chastised] of the Lord: but when we are judged of the Lord we are chastened, that we might not be condemned with the world."

While our robe covers all our unwilling personal blemishes and uncleanness in our Lord's sight, and in the sight of brethren who see each other from the Lord's standpoint, yet the Lord desires and requires that we shall come into such close sympathy with absolute purity and righteousness in thought, word and deed that we will "cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, *perfecting* holiness in the reverence of God." (2 Cor. 7:1) And to this end he grants his sanctified (consecrated) and white robed ones the cleansing power of his truth, that thus his elect bride might be cleansed by "the washing of water, by the Word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing."—Eph. 5:26, 27.

But oh, how few of the consecrated have so great a love for purity, so great a desire to keep the garment unspotted from the world, that they are thus careful to have every wrinkle quickly removed, and thereafter to guard the robe more zealously than ever. Yet these, and these alone, walk with the Lord in white and are overcomers, who in due time shall be glorified with him and sit with him in his throne—and it is their names that shall not be blotted out of the Lamb's book of life.

We are to understand from the Master's words that all who do not thus walk with him in white raiment are unworthy, shall not be joint-heirs in his kingdom, will not be confessed as his bride and joint-heir in the presence of the Father and the holy angels, but on the contrary, will have their names blotted out of the Lamb's book of life—erased from amongst the names of the "elect" church.

THE "LITTLE FLOCK" AND THE "GREAT COMPANY"

While the number of those who wear the robe of Christ's righteousness is, as compared with the numbers of the world, small indeed, yet how large a proportion of these are not walking in white, but have their robes greatly spotted by contact with the world, the flesh and the devil—by unfaithfulness or by carelessness, worldliness. We do not refer to those who deny the Lord and repudiate the ransom, thus taking off the wedding garment and standing with the world (or really in a worse condition than the world, in that they have rejected the grace of God): we refer to the true believers, who have made a full consecration of themselves to the Lord, and who for the sake of worldly advantages or earthly hopes or friendships or for the favors of nominal churches, are failing to live according to their covenant and privileges, and are thus, like Esau of old, selling their *birthright* (as new creatures in Christ) for a mess of pottage. Is there no hope for these, who fail to be overcomers, who fail to walk in white, who fail to gain the crown and the immortality to be bestowed only upon the "elect," "worthy," "overcomers?"

Yes, thank God! We rejoice that there is hope for these, *because* they have not cast off their wedding garments, even though they have gotten them sadly spotted and soiled by contact with the world. The class referred to are neither open nor wilful sinners, but those who unwisely are seeking to please and serve the Lord and to please and serve themselves and the world—"foolish virgins." They make a failure in every direction so far as pleasing is concerned: they do not please the Lord, they do not please themselves and they are not half satisfactory to the worldly. The only ground upon which divine favor can continue with them at all and could go after them to reclaim them is the merit of the robe of Christ's righteousness, which they still love and wear, although they have not loved it sufficiently to keep it unspotted. But, he who began the good work in them will continue it and perfect it for all who really love and trust him—even though it be completed in the great tribulation at the inauguration of the Millennial or "the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil 1:6) Since Christ became the surety for all who at heart still trust him, although not overcoming by complete self-sacrifice in full obedience to his instructions, it does not surprise us that he points out in his last communication to his church how he will deal with this numerous class of his followers and how it will result to them,—altho he made no such proposition in their "call."

After telling of the sealing of the elect class, the spiritual Israel, the peculiar people, zealous of good works, the little flock, the bride, the overcomers, a definite, predetermined number, "a hundred and forty and four thousand," gathered out of Babylon before the winds of the great tribulation are let loose upon the world, all of them bearing the seal or mark of God's favor in their foreheads—a noticeable *intellectual* evidence of divine favor, the impress of the spirit of the truth as well as the word of truth, our Lord shows us the "great

multitude" of his followers, "whose number no man is able to tell" (that is, it is not a foreordained or fixed number,—none were called to be of this company), who will eventually stand before the Lord "clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands," crying, "Salvation to our God which sitteth on the throne and unto the Lamb." Who are these who are not of the bride, the elect class, the overcomers, is the question? The answer is "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have *washed* their robes, and *made them white* in the blood of the Lamb. *Therefore* are they before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple." —Rev. 7:9, 10, 13-15.

The marks of distinction between this "great company" and the "little flock" are very pronounced, both as respects their present course and their future blessing. The faithful overcomers watch and keep their garments unspotted from the world. And this is given as one of the special conditions of acceptance as "overcomers" to joint-heirship with the Lord —"they have not defiled their garments." (Rev. 3:4) They have kept "their garments unspotted from the world." They have not been willing to permit sin to contaminate them and to separate them from the Lord, but have quickly applied for and obtained the precious blood to remove every stain. They are so heartily opposed to sin and so earnest about the keeping of this garment unspotted that the adversary gets no hold upon them—"the wicked one catcheth them not." (1 John 5:18) All of this indicates a full submission of their wills to the will of Christ—they are "dead with him," and hence could not willingly practice sin. Their reward is the crown of life, immortality, to be seated in the throne, and to constitute the temple of which our Lord is the cap-stone, the chief corner-stone. Now contrast with these the "great company:" lacking the intense love and zeal of the overcomers, they do not keep their garments with sufficient care, and as a result they lose all the rewards promised the overcomers; and, having failed in the race, they would get nothing, if it were not for our Lord's grace.

But God's grace cannot admit to heavenly perfection those who have not robes of spotless righteousness; and hence we are shown that these who have not cared for their garments and kept them white must be put through a severe experience before they can in any sense of the word be sharers of heavenly favors. These severe experiences are shown in the symbol as *washing their robes* in a great *tribulation*. But to show that not the penances or sufferings would cleanse the robes, that these might be necessary as proper punishments and disciplines, it is particularly stated that the efficacy for the cleansing is the "*blood* of the Lamb." Many will thus be purged, purified, and their garment, now sullied by contact with the world, often in the garb of nominal Christianity, will be cleansed of every guilty stain, when they, realizing the folly of their course, shall repentantly appeal to the Lord and use his help.

But sad disappointments attach to the experiences of this company: it is because they *fear* the reproaches of Christ that they shirk present privileges and opportunities for walking with him in white in the "sufferings of this present time:" behold, they not only miss the present joy and rejoicing of those who are faithful, but eventually they must come through *still greater* sufferings, if they would attain even to a lower place. Although loving the Lord and his people they are somewhat ashamed of them and hide, as it were, their faces from them, in the presence of the worldly: and behold the Master at his coming for his "bride" cannot confess their names in the presence of the Father and the holy angels. The little flock is informed of the Bridegroom's care, and obediently watching she shall be "accounted worthy to escape all those things coming upon the world" (including the great tribulation), but the "great company," although the Lord's people, in that they have not rejected him, must be treated like the hypocrites and pass through the great tribulation in order to their purification. These, be it observed, are not a class who in any sense repudiate the Lord, they are not of those who "draw back" from the Lord, for in such he declares he has "no pleasure" (Heb. 10:38): and the Apostle declares that such "draw back into *perdition*—second death. On the contrary, these are still "virgins," but foolish in that they are vainly trying to please and serve both God and mammon. They are wasting precious opportunities trying to find an easier way of following their Lord than "being made conformable unto *his death*."

We rejoice that ultimately these will sing praises to the Lord, and be glad in his wondrous grace. But we notice that even after their robes will be washed white in the time of trouble by the blood of the Lamb and in much tribulation, they wear no crowns as overcomers; but, having finally overcome, they are granted palms as emblems of their victory through Christ; and although they can never be the living temple of which Christ is the Head, we are told they shall be *servants* in that temple; and although they shall never sit in the throne, they are highly privileged to serve "before the throne." Grand and glorious privileges will be theirs, but Oh, they will lose the great prize, having sold it for the mess of pottage of present seeming advantage, which proves unsatisfactory and brings bitter after results. What exhortation to holiness, to complete consecration to his will, could be stronger than this supplied by our Lord's statement of the results of more and of less faithfulness?

Probably the majority of this "great company" of tribulation saints are living today; for at no time in the past was there the same degree of knowledge of God and his Word, except in the early church of apostolic times: never did so many profess to be the Lord's by consecration; and never were there so many subtle seductions from the "narrow way" of self-sacrifice. In centuries past the cleavage between the Lord's people and the world's people was much more distinct than today: persecution was more open and recognized, and while fewer named the name of Christ, they counted and appreciated the cost, as the larger number of today do not. (We of course ignore the professions and "great swelling words" of antichrist.) However, there was a great time of trouble in the end of the Jewish age in which many unclean may have been permitted to wash their robes white in the blood of the Lamb. And since then our Lord has not been without the power to bring as many as he chose through great tribulations for purification. Since the "overcomers" suffer *with* Christ *voluntarily* and the "great company" suffer *because* of Christ *involuntarily*, it might be difficult, is not impossible, for any except the Lord and the sufferers to know whether they suffered as self-sacrificers or as unwilling "tribulation" saints: but in the end of this age it will be different; for the overcomers will be taken to glory before the closing tribulation is fully poured out upon "Babylon."

THE QUEEN AND HER VIRGIN COMPANIONS

It is appropriate that we should remind ourselves afresh of the beautiful suggestion laid before us through the prophet David respecting the wedding garment of the bride. (Psa. 45:9-14) Here the Lord, through the prophet, tells us that the bride as the queen shall be presented before the King in "raiment of fine needle work" as well as in "clothing of wrought gold." The gold clothing, as we have heretofore seen, represents the immortality (an element of the divine nature) with which the church shall be invested in her resurrection glory. The raiment of fine needle work can be none other than the fine linen garment, clean and white, mentioned in Revelation. But here we have the additional suggestion given, that this garment will be finely embroidered.

The robe that was merely loaned to us at first, and which constituted our invitation to the marriage, to joint-heirship with the King's Son, was not at first our own, it was merely loaned or imputed to us. But it became a permanent gift from the Bridegroom to as many as accepted the invitation to union with him; and examining it carefully, they found upon it in delicate outline a stamping in graceful lines, corresponding to the richly embroidered robe worn by the King's Son. The suggestion of copying his robe was not only thus hinted at, but it was plainly declared that all who would be accounted worthy to be his "elect" companions, should in all respects be copies of the Bridegroom.—Rom. 8:29.

The careful setting of the stitches in the embroidering of this wedding garment has been the chief duty and constant occupation of the espoused virgin while waiting for the nuptial feast, at the return of the Bridegroom. True, much of the embroidering now done by us is very imperfect, because of first, our unskillfulness, secondly, our imperfections, and thirdly the disturbing influences about us (the world, the flesh and the devil). Nevertheless, we can well understand that it is the blessing of experience that is designed, and that every painstaking effort is strengthening character, and bringing us into fuller sympathy with our Lord; and that he, when he inspects his church, will take pleasure in even our imperfect results, if they give evidence that we have bestowed *effort*, because desirous of bringing all into conformity with his will; and he will accept of our imperfect work as tho it were perfect, and in the resurrection he will grant us ideal bodies with ideal powers and the ideal character embroidered perfectly upon the new robe, which will be *ours* through his grace.

And even here, the great company, the foolish virgins, not worthy to be the bride, and hence rejected from that

place of the "elect," are nevertheless pictured, in verses 14 and 15—"The virgins her [the queen's] companions that follow her shall be brought to thee, with gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought [even tho it be through great tribulation they shall ultimately shout Hosanna!]; they shall enter into the King's palace."

Please read here the poem of page 120, POEMS AND HYMNS OF DAWN.

FAITH

"Now faith is a basis of things hoped for, a conviction of things unseen."—Heb. 11:1.

The Christian life is a life of faith. Its first step is a step of faith, and its last step is the triumph of faith. All its victories are victories of faith, and its joys are the joys of faith. In the above text the Apostle speaks of faith as a basis of hope, as something substantial upon which hope may build. Hope is not faith; but hope is that buoyant, gladsome thing that is born of faith. A hope that is not based upon faith is a mere idle fiction which has no substantial comfort in it. Faith is the basis or substance out of which the living hope springs and grows naturally. Faith, then, must be a reasonable thing, well founded in that which is fixed, immovable, sure and steadfast, even in the word of God which liveth and abideth forever.—1 Pet. 1:23.

Such faith is not a matter of the intellect alone, altho the intellect has much to do with it. It is also a matter of the heart—"With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." If the heart be not right toward God, the intellect is easily biased toward its own preferences, which, in the carnal mind, are contrary to the righteousness of God; and so, the heart being wrong, the mind gropes in darkness concerning those things which pertain to eternal life and godliness.—"The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. 8:7); and, therefore, to such God does not, and cannot, reveal the treasures of his wisdom and grace.

We are taught that "without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. 11:6); and further that "faith without [corresponding] works [which attest its genuineness] is dead." (Jas. 2:17) "What advantage," inquires James, "has any one, tho he say he has faith, but have not works? This faith is not able to save him." (Jas. 2:14—*Diaglott*) And if faith without works is of no advantage, the inference is plain that without works it is equally impossible to please God. Yet, we may have both faith (or what often passes for faith) and works (corresponding with it) and not be pleasing to God. The faith not well founded, together with the works built upon it, is likely to be swept away when the storms and floods of trial beat upon it as upon a house built of wood, hay and stubble and resting on the shifting sand. It is all-important, therefore, that we have the right kind of faith, and that our works should be the outgrowth of that faith.

What, then, is faith? We answer, True faith is the reasonable and accepted conclusion of a logical argument based upon a reasonable premise or foundation. And more, it is the *only* reasonable conclusion to which such a logical argument could lead. Thus, reasoning on the principle of cause and effect, a principle firmly established in all the operations of natural and moral law, we see in the whole realm of nature the evidences of an intelligent Creator. We know that such effects as appear in the order of nature—as for instance the order of the spheres, the succession of the seasons, and of day and night, the growth of vegetation, etc., etc.,—could not be produced without an intelligent first cause. And so undeniable is the basis of fact thus furnished in nature's testimony, and so logical the reasoning from effect to cause, that the conclusion—that there is an intelligent, wise and powerful Creator—is so palpable and irresistible that the Scriptures declare the man a fool who does not accept it.—Psa. 14:1.

From these data alone we have substantial testimony upon which to base faith in God, even if he had given us no written revelation of himself. And no less substantial is the testimony given upon which to base our faith in his written revelation. For all that God expects us to believe beyond the realm of our senses and observation, he has given us an undeniable foundation of tangible fact, upon which he invites us to use our reasoning powers to arrive at conclusions of which we would otherwise be ignorant. Thus faith is a conviction of things unseen, based on the logical deductions from known facts—a most reasonable thing.

It is also manifest that, since the foundation upon which to base faith, and the reasoning power wherewith to draw logical conclusions from the known foundation truths, and "the spirit of a sound mind," the holy Spirit, the spirit, mind or disposition of Christ, to accept in simple sincerity all truth, are all given to us of God, so also, as Paul affirms, the faith thus derived may be considered, as it thus really is, "the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8), while it is also the free exercise of our own volition in obedience to the laws of conscience and of sound judgment.

There is nothing more common or necessary among men than faith. We exercise faith in the laws of nature and act upon it constantly. We till the soil and sow the seed in full faith in a future harvest to be brought forth by the continued operations of natural law, reasoning that the sun which shines today will shine again tomorrow, that the showers of yesterday will be repeated, and that vegetation will still be true to the old law of development and growth under these favorable conditions. Who thinks of questioning these things?

Surely no one will question them who has become thoroughly acquainted with these methods in the past, and faith in them for the future is reasonable; while, on the other hand, doubt and unbelief would be unreasonable and foolish. The man who would refuse to plant for fear the sun would not rise again or the rain fall, would be rightly considered a fool. Why? Because faith is the only reasonable thing where the ground of faith is so well established. Even a child would laugh at another child who could not trust his parents for tomorrow's necessities when today's and yesterday's were abundantly provided for: his lack of faith would be so unreasonable. And just so when we have become acquainted with God, as all may who will study his works and ways in nature and revelation, to doubt is foolish; while full faith, perfect confidence in his wisdom, justice, love and power, is the only reasonable conclusion.

Therefore it is that "without faith it is impossible to please God." Thus faith, being a reasonable conviction of things unseen, becomes a basis of hope for the things which God has promised. As Paul expresses it, "Faith is a basis of things hoped for, a conviction of thing unseen." (Heb. 11:1) With the same confidence, therefore, with which we look for an autumnal harvest from our spring time seed-sowing, before we see any sign of that harvest, we should also look for the fulfilment of all God's promises in due season, even before we see indication of their fulfilment.

There is no difficulty in exercising faith in God and in any and all of his promises, if we acquaint ourselves with his character and in simple sincerity apply our hearts unto the instructions of his Word. Our faith in all God's promises should be as unwavering as our confidence that tomorrow's sun will rise. Thus it was in the cases of some commendable examples to which the Apostle Paul refers (Heb. 11)—of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David and Samuel and the prophets, who, by faith in the promises and directions of God, subdued kingdoms, shut lions' mouths, quenched the power of fire, raised dead ones to life, and, in hope of a better resurrection submitted to privations, persecutions and ignominious deaths, having faith in the promise of God, in due time to reward their loyalty to him and to the principles of truth and righteousness. When God declared that a flood was coming and commanded the building of an ark, the reasonable course was to build the ark and to warn men, altho the flood, and every indication of it, tarried for many years.

Similarly, when God commanded Abraham to sacrifice his son, it was reasonable for Abraham to obey the command and to leave to God the fulfilment of the promises which centered in that son. When he commanded Lot to flee out of Sodom it was the only reasonable thing for Lot to do, to make haste and depart, tho the morning was gloriously fair.

These were commendable acts of simple, implicit and reasonable faith. But observe that in every instance of faith commended in the Bible there was good ground for faith; there was a clear command of God, a well defined principle of truth and righteousness; and no foolish imaginations or vague impressions were blindly followed. How foolish Noah would have been to spend energy and valuable time in building an ark and warning the people, if he had only *imagined* that a flood was coming. How culpable Abraham would have been in laying his son on the altar of sacrifice, had he only *imagined* that God desired him to do so. And how insane Lot would have appeared in hastening out of Sodom that bright

morning declaring that the city would be destroyed, had he been given no reliable divine assurance of it.

Notice that in each instance of unusual requirement God gave clear evidence of his will according to the methods of that dispensation, either by an angel, a vision, or some remarkable circumstance—ways, however, which are not now necessary, since the completed Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments form a perfect guide to faith (2 Tim. 3:15-17), and which, therefore, are not now resorted to. And in the instances of suffering and martyrdom cited, God's will was clearly expressed in the principles of truth and righteousness which he ordained, and which were properly recognized as more valuable even than life. These illustrations of faith should be specially marked by very many who claim to have *wonderful faith* in God, when the chief wonder in it is the ability to believe so much on so slight a foundation.

In many enterprises, too, undertaken under the name of works of faith, and successfully carried on financially, faith has more foundation in the sympathies of philanthropic people, than in the plan, methods and promises of God. If Christian people make public statements that they are starting a benevolent enterprise for the amelioration of the present woes of suffering humanity, they may do it with a large degree of faith in the support of benevolent people; even the worldly are often fully as active in these directions as Christians. For instance, mark the responses to calls for help in great calamities and disasters.

Successes in the direction of popular benevolences are not always proofs of faith in God, tho those so engaged are doing good works, and the public appeals for assistance are often right and proper; but a clearer manifestation of faith in God is that humble confidence which espouses his unpopular cause, which perseveres in pursuing it, in the face of all opposition and without human encouragement, and which patiently endures whatever of reproach, discouragement, privation and even persecution it may bring, assured of ultimate triumph according to his promise, and finding in his blessed truth and in his approval all the present reward and incentive desired.

One expression of the Apostle Paul should not be forgotten. It reads, "Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God." (Rom. 14:22) If we advertise our faith and our needs and thus make capital out of them by eliciting the sympathies and assistance of men, we are in great danger of seeking to be pleasers of men. Almost imperceptibly this motive will creep into the heart and become a governing power in our actions, often causing deflections from the straight and narrow path of divine appointment. Beware when all men speak well of you, and when multitudes are ready to line up with your work and your methods; and look well to it that no element of worldly ambition or worldly policy be in it to ensnare your feet and to allure you from the narrow way.—Luke 6:26. See also Luke 4:6-8.

There is much in the way of profession of great faith and in the relating of really improper proceedings and their results as wonderful feats of faith, which often does great harm to both speakers and hearers.

While a true faith is pleasing to God, what often passes for faith among Christians must be correspondingly displeasing to him. Some, without careful observation and study of God's ways, jump to hasty conclusions, often greatly out of harmony with the spirit of divine truth; and, acting and teaching accordingly, dishonor the Lord and bring reproach upon his cause. Among such, too, are often found the loudest boasters of faith. Their faith is so strong, so rooted and grounded and established in what God did not say, that they have no inclination to hear or heed what he did say. In such instances God would be honored far more by the sealing of the lips. Rather let our faith be expressed to God, and let our confidence be manifest to him; and to our brethren let it be manifested more by our deeds of faith than by our words. Thus was the faith of the ancient worthies attested. Where is boasting then? It is excluded by the law of faith. (Rom. 3:27) The very nature of pure, true faith is opposed to boastfulness. It is sincere and too humbly mindful of personal weakness and necessary dependence on God to be boastful. In fact, a humble, faithful walk with God excludes every mean disposition, and elevates the character far beyond them.

However, the faith of which we speak is something which belongs only to the children of God. Their hearts being in harmony with God and his righteousness, his Word is unto them the end of all controversy; and their faith in that Word is the basis of their joyful hopes, the inspiration of their activities, and the anchor to their souls through all the storms of the present life.

While faith depends for its earliest existence upon a right attitude of heart toward God and his righteousness, it continues to grow and thrive by a more close acquaintance and intimate communion with God and a continual striving to attain to his righteousness. Faith, in its beginning, is always comparatively weak; but God does not despise the day of small things. "A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, till he send forth judgment unto victory." (Isa. 42:3; Matt. 12.:20) So also the Lord's people who are strong in the faith are taught to bear with the weaker ones.—Rom. 14:1; 15:1; 1 Thes. 5:14; Acts 20:35.

Since faith must necessarily be at the very basis of Christian character and is such an important element in its construction, even to the grand and glorious finish; and since "without faith it is impossible to please God," the effort of every Christian should be toward a continual growth in faith. To do this we must maintain a close walk and fellowship with God in all circumstances and under all conditions. Does the sunshine of prosperity make glad our hearts? let us see that we are glad in the Lord; that our hearts are lifted to him in grateful adoration and praise for all his benefits, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift. Or, do the clouds gather and the storms of adversity beat upon the soul? then call to mind the goodness of the Lord in times past, and take courage, assured that the sun will shine again when the lessons of this discipline have been learned.—Psa. 77:10 12.

Nothing is more encouraging to faith than to consider the Lord's past faithfulness to us, and his promises that thus it shall be to the end. All our interests, temporal and spiritual, are in his hands, if we are his; and "no good thing will be withheld from them that walk uprightly." "All things shall work together for good to them that love God, to the called according to his purpose." How often, as the years go by, the children of God can see this! As they realize what the discipline of life, patiently and lovingly submitted to, has already wrought in them, they see, as perhaps they could not see while passing through much of it, how necessary it has been to the developing of character in them; and so they are thankful for the rough and thorny places, as well as for the smooth, because of the peaceable fruits of righteousness, which they have learned to prize above all else.

Christians may often encourage one another's faith by mingling their prayers and praises together, and by speaking to each other of their Christian experiences, of how God has led them and borne them up under trials which otherwise would have overcome them. Such indeed is the will of God, that we should so stimulate each other by loving communion and fellowship one with another in spiritual things, and by unitedly drawing near to God in prayer and praise. This is a means of grace that no Christian who has the opportunity to enjoy can afford to forego. Yet even this must not supersede that still more potent means of grace; *viz.*, secret communion with God, when, alone with him, we can open our hearts as to none else, assured that, even though language be lame, he is able to read the very thoughts and purposes of our hearts. From such seasons of prayer and communion come the answers of peace which strengthen faith into a firm and steady confidence; and thus we are enabled the more fully to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height of the love of Christ, and of the fulness of God's loving benevolence toward us.—Eph. 3:16-19.

Let us endeavor to have more of that pure true faith

> "Which bears unmoved the world's dark frown,
> Nor heeds its scornful smile;
> Which seas of trouble cannot drown,
> Nor Satan's arts beguile"—

the faith which overcomes the spirit of the world in us and about us, and which will remove mountains of difficulty, and secure all that our hearts desire, since it is written, "Ye shall ask what ye will [our wills being in harmony with the will of God], and it shall be done unto you."—John 15:7.

When we see, thus, how reasonable a thing faith is, how God through his natural and written revelation of himself appeals to the highest faculty of our nature (our reason) and bids us follow its logical deductions of faith in God, and to rest in and act upon its proper conclusions in studying his works and ways, we realize truly that this faith is a firm basis of hope in the things unseen, "which hope we have as an anchor, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth [by faith] into that within the vail"—into the glory of the spiritual condition.—Heb. 6:19. M. F. RUSSELL.

POST-MILLENNIALISM MAKES A WORLDLY CHURCH

By the late A. J. Gordon, D. D.

"This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven" is the parting promise of Jesus to his disciples, communicated through the two men in white apparel, as a cloud received him out of their sight. When after more than fifty years in glory he breaks the silence and speaks once more in the Revelation which he gave to his servant John, the post-ascension Gospel which he sends opens with "Behold, he cometh with clouds" and closes with "Surely I come quickly." Considering the solemn emphasis thus laid upon this doctrine, and considering the great prominence given to it throughout the teaching of our Lord and of his apostles, how was it that for the first five years of my pastoral life it had absolutely no place in my preaching? Undoubtedly the reason lay in the lack of early instruction. Of all the sermons heard from childhood on, I do not remember listening to a single one upon this subject. In the theological course, while this truth had its place indeed, it was taught as in most theological seminaries of this country, according to the post-millennial interpretation; and with the most reverent respect for the teachers holding this view I must express my mature conviction that, tho the doctrine of our Lord's coming is not ignored in this system, it is placed in such a setting as to render it quite impractical as a theme for preaching and quite inoperative as a motive for Christian living. For if a millennium must intervene before the return of our Lord from heaven, or if the world's conversion must he accomplished before he shall come in his glory, how is it possible for his disciples in this present time to obey his words: "Watch, therefore, for ye know not what hour your Lord shall come?"

I well remember in my early ministry hearing two humble and consecrated laymen speaking of this hope in the meetings of the church, and urging it upon Christians as the ground of unworldliness and watchfulness of life. Discussion followed with these good brethren, and then a searching of the Scriptures to see if these things were so: and then a conviction of their truth; and then? The godly William Hewitson declares that the discovery of the Scriptural hope of our Lord's second coming wrought in him a change amounting almost to a second conversion. What if another, not presuming to be named in company with this consecrated saint, should nevertheless set his hand and seal to the affirmation that the strongest and most permanent impulse of his ministry came from his apprehension of the blessed hope of our Lord's second coming?

But how is it that this doctrine, so plainly and conspicuously written in Scripture, could have remained so long undiscovered? In answering this question we see how little ground we have for glorying over the Jews. They did not recognize Christ in his first advent because they discerned in Scripture only those predictions which announced him as a reigning and conquering Messiah. This conception they wove into a veil of exposition and tradition so thick that when Jesus appeared as the lowly and humble Nazarene they knew him not, but "hid as it were their faces from him." And this strong prepossession still obscures their vision so that, "even unto this day, when Moses is read the veil is upon their heart."

With the larger class of Gentile Christians the case is just the reverse. They know Christ crucified, and believing that the cross is to conquer the world, and that the preaching of the Gospel in the present dispensation is to bring all men to God, they see no need of the personal coming of the Christ as King to subdue all things under his feet and to reign on the earth. This conception in turn has been woven into an elaborate veil of tradition for Gentile believers and "until this day, remaineth the same veil untaken away" in the reading of the New Testament.

It was not so in the beginning. For three hundred years the church occupied the position of a bride awaiting the return of the Bridegroom from heaven—she meantime, holding herself free from all alliance with this world, content to fulfil her calling in witnessing for Christ, in suffering with Christ, and so to accomplish her appointed work of the gathering out of the elect body for the Lord "until he come." A strange and almost grotesque conception to many modern Christians no doubt. But it was while maintaining this attitude that the church moved on most rapidly in missionary conquests.

Then came the foreshadowings of the great apostasy. The world which had been a foe to the church became her friend and patron; Constantine, the Emperor of Rome, became her head, and thus the eyes of Christians began to be withdrawn from him who is "Head over all things to the church." The great and good Augustine yielded to the seduction and was among the first to teach that in the temporal triumph of Christianity the kingdom had already come, tho the King with whose return the primitive church had been wont to identify the appearing of the kingdom was still absent. Little by little, as the apostasy deepened, this early hope of Christians became eclipsed till, in the words of Auberlin, "when the church became a harlot she ceased to be a bride who goes forth to meet her bridegroom," and thus *chiliasm* disappeared. What moreover would have been deemed an apostasy in the primitive church grew into a tradition and a creed in the post-Nicene church, which creed until this day largely rules the faith of Christians. . . . .

The most eminent living master of ecclesiastical history, Harnack, photographing in a single sentence the church of the earliest centuries, says: "Originally the church was the heavenly bride of Christ, the abiding place of the holy Spirit." Does the reader not see that here is the same two-fold conception—Christ in-resident in the church by the Spirit; and Christ expected to return in person as the Bridegroom for his bride? . . . . With no power except "the irresistible might of weakness;" with no wealth except the riches of glory inherited through her heavenly citizenship; refusing all compromise with the world, declining all patronage of kings and emperors, she nevertheless went forth conquering and to conquer.

SURRENDER SELF-WILL—RECEIVE GOD'S WILL

Christian life is too often grievously destitute of real spiritual power and is essentially carnal, and it is the duty and privilege of every child of God to enter at once into the newness of life, and to walk in the power of Christ's resurrection.

Hence the starting point—instant abandonment of sin and of every known weight which prevents or hinders progress. Whatever is wrong or believed to be wrong in God's sight cannot be indulged with impunity. It is held up as utterly destructive of all holy living and testimony, as unnecessary [improper] because wrong, and as making impossible even *assurance of salvation.*

Secondly, a deadly blow is aimed at self-life in its six forms: self-dependence, self-help, self-pleasing, self-will, self-seeking and self-glory; in other words, a new practical *center* is sought for all the life to revolve about, and in this way a new step is taken in advance. Beyond the territory of known sin there lies another almost as dangerous, where self-indulgence is the peculiar feature. There is a large class of pleasures, amusements, occupations, which do not bear the hideous features of sin, but which all tend to selfishness.

Thirdly, the surrender of will to God in obedience. Christ must to every believer become not only Saviour but *Lord.* (Rom. 10:9, R. V.) "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the holy Ghost." (1 Cor. 12:3) Hundreds who accept him as Saviour from sin have no real conception of him as the actual Master and Sovereign of the daily life.

Fourthly, *the infilling of the spirit.* Here, is perhaps the most delicate and difficult part of this teaching. But it is not well to stop on phrases; whether we agree or not on the exact form of words, we must agree on facts, and conspicuous among the facts is this, that thousands of professed believers, like the Ephesian disciples in Acts 19, do not practically know whether there be a holy ghost or not.

Dr. Gordon discriminates between *sealing, filling* and *anointing.*

Fifthly, *the Revelation of Jesus Christ in the soul as an indwelling Presence.*—This is the climax of this teaching. The supreme end of the holy Spirit's indwelling and inworking is to manifest the personal Christ as consciously our possession and in possession of us.

Sixthly, beyond these there is always a last stage of teaching—the privileges and victories implied in this higher or deeper life, such as the rest life of faith, power over sin, passion for souls, conscious fellowship with God, growing possession of promises, and prevailing prayer and intercession.

Wherein does this differ from the teaching now common in the majority of our churches, may be asked?

(1) It makes more of Jesus as a Saviour who will save us from our sins. "The very God of peace sanctify you wholly." "Faithful is he who calleth you, who also will do it."

(2) It magnifies the necessity of surrender to the will of God and breaking with the world. In apostolic times if a man confessed Christ he knew what it meant, for the world would break with him; but now it is not so. Many pro-

fessing Christians go on hand in hand with the world, and their lives are barren and unfruitful in consequence.

(3) It makes much of the abiding presence of Jesus. The heart is opened. He is asked to come in and abide, and faith rests upon his promise to do so. His presence causes the heart to burn as did the hearts of the disciples going to Emmaus; brings peace, as when he came over the waves to the disciples on the sea; drives out evil as he cleansed the temple; and fills the soul with joy as when he appeared to the disciples in the upper room.

(4) While the object sought is freedom from sin and effectiveness in service it makes more of receiving than doing. We must, with a childlike spirit, receive the good things God is ready to bestow *before we can be a blessing to others.* "I will bless thee and thou shalt be a blessing," the Lord said to Abraham. The disciples must first receive the bread from Christ's hand before they could distribute to others.

Mark Guy Pearse says:—"Some years ago I was traveling in the train; seated in the carriage alone I had the Book open at Acts 1:8. I was thinking of the 'Higher Life,' of which just then we had heard a good deal—vexed and angry at the little headway, and still less heartway, that I could make in the matter. There was a life of which I could conceive, very bright and very beautiful like a star. 'Like a star indeed,' I said, half scornfully, 'a long ways off, and I have neither wings nor ladder long enough to reach it.' Then my eye fell upon the word 'receive.' This was something very different. 'Receive' I said, with my difficulties silenced, and ashamed; of course I can receive. That is what the baby can do—receive. That needs no genius, no goodness, but only want. Any beggar can take a six-pence if it is given to him. I looked out the window. The showers fell, blessing everything. But just outside the wayside station was a little cottage, and at the corner of it the old woman had set her broken pitcher, and it was filled to the brim. 'My Lord,' I sighed, humble and grateful, 'I bring thee my poor heart—fill it to the brim!' "Ye shall receive"—stay your thoughts upon the Word until it kindle longing expectation, the boldness that claims the promise as your own."

—*G. C. Huntington.*

APOSTOLIC ADVICE TO A YOUNG CHRISTIAN

June 13.—2 Tim. 1:1-7; 3:14-17.

"From a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation."—2 Tim. 3:15.

The words of this lesson, addressed by the Apostle Paul to Timothy, are sound advice to all Christians, especially to such as are young in the truth, and particularly if they have consecrated their lives to the Lord and his service, and are seeking to be useful according to their consecration as his ministers or servants—whether in a public or in a private service, according to their talents and opportunities.

These words were addressed to Timothy, when the Apostle Paul was an old man, a prisoner in Rome, because of his testimony for the Lord. Nor was Timothy a child in years at the time this epistle was addressed to him. Timothy's mother and himself were converts to the Gospel of Christ presumably at the time of Paul's visit to their home at Lystra during his first missionary tour. It is presumed that at the time of his receipt of this letter Timothy must have been about forty years of age. Tradition has it that he was about sixteen years old at the time of his own and his mother's conversion to the Gospel. When he was about twenty-one years of age he, with Silas, accompanied the Apostle Paul on his second tour through Asia Minor, and from that time on for some sixteen years he was closely identified with the Apostle in his service of the truth, until left by the Apostle with the church at Ephesus, that he might help them over some difficulties into which they had fallen. It was while Timothy was thus serving the church at Ephesus that he received the two epistles which bear his name.

Paul introduces himself not by calling attention to his personal qualities as a logician, nor by boasting of any service which he had performed as the Lord's servant and minister of the truth; but, properly, by reminding Timothy of his apostleship (one of the twelve, taking Judas' place) specially commissioned by the Lord to introduce his Gospel, and specially prepared for the work by being made a witness of the Lord's resurrection, having been granted a glimpse of his glorious person on his way to Damascus and commissioned to declare the conditions for the fulfillment to men of God's promise of life, provided in Christ Jesus.

Although the Apostle had no natural children of his own, his tender address to Timothy as his "dearly beloved son," and his invocation upon him of a divine blessing, shows that he lacked none of those fine, noble and endearing sentiments which belong to a true parent. Indeed, the very fact that he had no natural children seems to have broadened the Apostle's sentiments to such an extent that figuratively he took into his affections, as his own children, all who accepted the Gospel. We remember that he frequently used this figure of speech, "Although ye have many teachers, ye have not many fathers in the Gospel"—"I have begotten you in my bonds." On another occasion he represents his efforts for a development of a fully consecrated Christian life amongst the believers under the figure of a mother travailing for her children. This being true of the Apostle's general sentiment toward the household of faith, it would be much more true in the case of Timothy, who had so nobly and truly filled the part of a son to him.

Incidentally the Apostle here points out the purity of his conscience toward God, before his eyes were opened to a recognition of the Lord Jesus, while making mention to Timothy that he prayed for him day and night with great desire to see him, and a remembrance of Timothy's tears, when they parted company at Ephesus in the interest of the truth. It was not according to the personal preferences of either that they had separated, but both had sunk personal convenience and preference in the interest of the Lord's cause.

We note with appreciation the Apostle's care over this younger brother in the truth, in whom he sees such great promise of present and future service. He realizes, perhaps better than Timothy does, the snares of the adversary, by which one placed in so prominent a position is likely to be assailed. Would he become heady and high minded? would he lose his faith in the cross of Christ? would he fall into the snare of some of the philosophies, falsely so-called? would he become vainly puffed up by a fleshly mind, and get to feeling himself to be a "somebody?" Or would he, on the contrary, be a faithful soldier of the cross, meek, humble, gentle toward all, an example both in faith and practice to those with whom he came in contact? And withal, would he hold fast to the Scriptures and be apt to teach others to look to this divine source of information? He remembered that heretofore Timothy had been so close to himself in the work that he had been measurably shielded from many trials to which he would now be exposed; and yet, no doubt he realized that, if Timothy would be prepared to take the work of a general minister, which Paul, the prisoner and growing old, must shortly lay aside, it was time that he was learning how to stand, complete in the strength which God supplies through his Word, without leaning so particularly, as heretofore, upon any earthly prop.

These reflections no doubt had much to do with the Apostle's prayers for Timothy "night and day;" and he now writes with a view to strengthening him along these lines reminding him of the genuine faith and piety which he had inherited both from his mother and his grandmother, and assuring him that he believed that this had laid a deep foundation of true piety and faith in Timothy's own heart. We pause here to notice the fact everywhere kept prominent in the Scriptures that according to the divine arrangement not only are the sins of the parents visited upon the children for several generations, but also that the faith and godliness of the parents, when rightly based on the Word of God and the true promises of that Word, lay the foundation of character in their children, upon which there is the greater hope that a life of godliness and usefulness may be built.

Not only does the Apostle strengthen Timothy's mind by a remembrance of the goodly heritage of faith and piety received from his mother and grandmother, but in addition he reminds him of the grace of God specially conferred upon him (Timothy) at that certain time when he made a full consecration of himself to the Lord, to be God's servant; when the Apostle, exercising his power as an Apostle, and as was common in those days, communicated to Timothy by supernatural power an outward gift or token of the holy Spirit, through the laying on of his hands. The Apostle had evidently either heard or surmised that Timothy was allowing the fervor of his zeal for God to die out, and hence here he urges him to "stir up the gift of God which is in thee." The Greek word here rendered "stir up" has the significance of *re-enkindle:* as though the Apostle said, Reënkindle your gift by renewed energy.

The next verse enforces this view, implying that the Apostle thought that Timothy was in danger of being overcome by *fear,* so as to allow his zeal to abate. And hence he re-

minds him that the Spirit of the Lord imparted to his people is not a spirit of fear, but on the contrary a spirit of power, energy, zeal, awakened by love—loving devotion to God, and a desire to please and serve him; loving devotion to the truth, and a loving devotion to God's people and a desire to build them up in holy things, and to do good unto all men as we have opportunity. And yet, lest Timothy should get the thought that the Spirit of God led only to a zeal or energy —that might at times be unwise in its exercise and do more harm than good—the Apostle adds that the Spirit of God which he bestows upon those who are begotten as his sons is a spirit of a "sound mind;" a mind that is fortified and strengthened by the Word of the Lord on every subject, and hence, while thoroughly fearless of man, is wise in judging of times, seasons and methods for using the energy of love which burns as a fire within the consecrated heart. O that all of God's children might appreciate, and more and more obtain, the spirit of a sound mind, by which all of their talents might be used, not only fearlessly but wisely, in the Master's service.

Continuing his exhortation (3:14-15) the Apostle impresses upon Timothy two things: (1) That he had been taught of God, and (2) that this teaching of God had come to him through the Scriptures, which, he assures him, are sufficient to bring him all the way to the complete realization (in the resurrection) of that salvation which God has provided through faith in Christ Jesus. It will be well for us all to remember that all the graces of the spirit, all the progress in the knowledge of divine things to which we already have attained, that may have really helped us nearer to God and to holiness, have come to us through the Scriptures of the Old Testament, and through the words of our Lord and his inspired apostles: nor will it ever be necessary to go to other channels for the true wisdom which would prepare us for the salvation promised.

Proceeding the Apostle shows (verses 16, 17) that the Scriptures which God inspired are profitable in every direction, and quite sufficient for the man of God. Needing no supplements of visions or dreams, either his own or other men's. They are profitable for doctrine, containing the full statement of the divine plan; and no human authority is competent to add thereto. Who hath known the mind of the Lord?—Who hath been his counselor? They are useful also for reproof toward others: No words that we can use in correcting the errors of others either in word or doctrine could possibly be as forcible for reproof as the inspired words of Scripture. They are useful also for "correction," literally, "to bring up and establish one in the right." No standard of morals or of discipline can so thoroughly search out the heart and correct its waywardness as the Lord's Word.

Not, however, that God's Word is merely a statement of platitudes and moral instruction—it is far more than this; it searches the heart, the motives, the intentions, the thoughts, the ambitions, the aspirations. It pronounces a blessing upon the "pure in heart," those whose intentions are upright, honest, clean. The Word of the Lord as a corrector "in righteousness" takes hold upon all the affairs of life, and to those who are exercised thereby gives not only the spirit of a sound mind so that they are able to weigh and appreciate things from the true standpoint—God's standpoint of righteousness; but it also inculcates a righteousness toward God, and the propriety of seeking that holiness of which God is the perfect example. Moreover, it reaches down to the relationships between husbands and wives, parents and children, friends and neighbors. If permitted, it settles every matter for us on lines of justice and love.

The Apostle assures us accordingly that God's teachings through the Scriptures are given—"That the man of God may be furnished completely unto every good work."—Revised Version.

Here the Apostle has reference to perfection of *character* (he makes no reference to perfection in the flesh, elsewhere assuring us that even in his own case he realized "in my flesh dwelleth no perfection"). The perfection of character here pointed out as the proper and desirable aim of all Christians, and prepared for by the Lord through the giving of his inspired Word, should be the aim, the mark, toward which all the soldiers of the cross running in the race for the great prize should bend their energies. Perfection of character was exemplified to us in the person of our dear Redeemer, whom God has exalted to the right hand of majesty and power; and we are informed by the Apostle that the Father has predestinated that all of the "little flock" who will share the kingdom with Christ must be conformed to this glorious image of his Son—must have perfected characters, hearts, minds, fully submitted to the will of the Father and to all righteousness, in all things; however imperfect the earthen vessel may be, and however incompletely we may be able at our best to carry out in every thought and word and deed all the desires of our hearts and the endeavors of our transformed minds—new characters, the earnest or beginning of the new natures which will be completed in the first resurrection.

PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

JUNE 20.—ROMANS 14:10-21.

"It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor anything whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is ensnared or made weak."—Rom. 14:21.

In this lesson the Apostle brings forcibly to our attention the fact that amongst those who have accepted Christ as their Saviour, trusting in his precious blood and consecrating themselves to him, there should be permitted the greatest liberty of conscience. We need, however, to discriminate between liberty in the matter of *conscience*, and liberty in the matter of *faith*. These two very different things are very frequently confounded; and the Apostle's words in this lesson are made an excuse for fellowshipping *any* faith or *no* faith. On the contrary, the Apostle very emphatically shows elsewhere, in this very same epistle, and in all his writings, that matters of faith and of divine instruction are not matters of conscience at all; and our consciences (otherwise our *judgments*) are not to determine in reference to what we shall believe, in the sense of deciding our faith: on that subject the entire church of God stands upon one platform; and whoever does not stand upon that platform is not related to the church of God in any sense or particular.

St. Paul declared that platform emphatically when he said: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received [first of all] how that Christ DIED *for our sins*, according to the Scriptures, and that he was raised again on the third day for our justification." Whoever received this testimony (that his sins have been atoned for) into a good and honest heart, accepting Jesus as his Redeemer, and seeking to live separate from sin and in harmony with God, and accepting from the risen Christ the robe of his righteousness, such a one was thereby "*justified*" from all things, from which the law could not justify. It is not, therefore, for one to say, "You may be justified through faith in the Redeemer, through faith in the precious blood, and I will be justified by works of the law;" nor for another to say, "I will be justified, not by faith in the blood, but by walking in the footsteps of Jesus." No, there is only the one name given under heaven, only the one faith, only the one door, only the one way of access into the justified state or condition. We are not, therefore, to excuse differences on this fundamental doctrine by calling them matters of conscience, for conscience has nothing to do with the matter. These are faith differences. He who has the faith rightly based is justified, and he who has not the properly based faith is unjustified and is yet in his sins.

Neither can this question of conscience excuse from obedience to any of the matters which are clearly and distinctly taught by the Lord and his apostles by word and example. For instance, our Lord enjoined love of the brethren: it is not the province, therefore, of any man's conscience to judge that in his case love of the brethren is unnecessary. Again, Christ and the apostles enjoined upon the church that we should not only symbolically eat his flesh (appropriate the merit of his sacrifice) and drink his blood (share his death —be dead with him), but our Lord provided an outward symbol of this to be commemorated annually and said, "Do *this*, in remembrance of me." And the apostles set us the example of doing *this* on its anniversary. It is not, therefore, a matter of conscience, but a matter of obedience, whether we do it or do it not. Similarly, our Lord declared the immersion (burial) of his will into the Father's will and the real baptism into death, saying, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished." A few days after this it was accomplished, "finished," at Calvary; but in addition to this, the real baptism, our Lord at the beginning of his consecration symbolized it in a water immersion at the hands of John, saying, "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness."—Matt. 3:15.

The apostles also enjoined this, explaining that water bap-

tism was "*not* the putting away of the filth of the flesh," but simply "the answer [outward declaration] of a good conscience toward God;" they instructed (Rom. 6:2-6) that the real baptism is a baptism or burial of the will into the will of Christ, whereby the believer becomes dead to his own will and alive to the will of Christ; dead with him to the world, its aims, ambitions, hopes, fears, etc., and henceforth alive with Christ, to the hopes and promises set before us in his Gospel. Yet, while teaching this, as the real baptism, the apostles, nevertheless, clearly taught by word and deed a baptism in water, as the outward symbol of this heart-consecration and burial of the will, whereby our good consciences would testify or answer to our faith and obedience in the sight of fellow-believers. It is not, therefore, a matter for any man's conscience to decide whether or not he will obey the voice of the Lord and of the apostles: It is merely a question of *knowledge* and of *obedience*, both as respects the real baptism of the will, and also respecting the outward, symbolic baptism in water. It is a fact that quite a great many (mistaught) have never learned either of the true baptism or burial of the will by full consecration into the will of Christ, nor of the symbolic baptism. And some have learned of the symbolic baptism who do not understand and have never performed the real baptism of consecration. And others have performed the real baptism of consecration, but have never performed the symbolic baptism. We believe that disobedience on the part of this latter class in connection with the symbol will quite probably be excused by the Lord because of ignorance; but we have no hesitation in saying that neither the real baptism, nor its symbol in water are matters that can be set aside or excused as a question of conscience (judgment) upon which each has a right to exercise his own opinion.

In the lesson before us the Apostle points out that those who have become God's people by obedient faith and consecration (so long as they maintain that *faith* and *consecration*) are amenable only to God with respect to their views of his will on minor matters respecting which he has not given positive instructions. It is to him that each one is responsible. If really and truly they bow their knee to him, and if really and truly their tongues confess to him, no human being has either the right or the ability to intervene and to judge of their consciences, in respect to feasts or fasts, new moons or holy days, eating meat or abstaining from meat—none of which things are regulated under the New Covenant. Others have the right to commend or advise on these subjects, but have not the right to command or condemn. The Apostle urges that since each one of us must give an account of himself to God as a consecrated member of the body of Christ, according to his own conscience or judgment of the Lord's will, therefore, each is to remember that God is the Judge of all; and instead of condemning one another for conscientious differences with reference to feasts and fasts, etc., each should rather make sure that from his own life he remove everything that would be calculated to mislead or to stumble his brother by a violation of his conscience.

The important point of discussion toward which the Apostle's argument was directed was the eating of meat which had previously been offered to idols—and it would appear that nearly all the meat sold in the market places in heathen countries was so offered. Some of the brethren insisted that therefore they were practically deprived of eating meat at a neighbor's house or at a restaurant, and felt obliged to inquire as would a Jew. And these were inclined to look with discredit upon those who did eat such meat. The Apostle shows that his mind took the broad view, that since the idol was nothing, the meat could not have been injured in any manner. Nevertheless, while he would like to have seen all the brethren fully informed on the subject, he discouraged any attempt on the part of others to shame them into violating their consciences; and he points out to those who are strong, and who could see the matter clearly, that instead of ridiculing the weaker brethren, they should be glad to note their conscientiousness and to help them, for by ridicule and getting them to violate their conscience they might start in a downward course, which would lead to their destruction. Instead of forcing the weaker brother to use a liberty which would violate his conscience, the stronger brother, if he asked the weaker to eat at his table, should be careful to provide meat that had not been offered to idols, that the weaker brother might not be tempted to violate his conscience. Why should we be so bent on using our liberty and forcing it on others when we see that it might lead to the injury of brothers for whom Christ died? Christ left the glory with the Father and humbled himself to man's condition, and even to death, giving up life itself for our fallen race; can we, therefore, if we have our Master's spirit, do less than sacrifice some of our rights and liberties in the interest of the weaker brethren? And by so doing your good, your liberty, your right view of the matter, would not be evil spoken of.

We are indeed the kingdom of God in embryo, and as such we are not in bondage, but realize the liberty which the poor world, ignorant of the great Emancipator, Christ, and the great emancipation which he has wrought for those who receive him, does not comprehend. But, urges the Apostle, let us remember, dear brethren, that the advantage of being members of this embryo kingdom is not merely these *liberties*, which release us from the Mosaic restrictions with reference to what we will eat and to what we will drink, but it means far more, even in the present life. The most valuable blessings which we have as members of this embryo kingdom are righteousness (justification through Christ) and its resulting blessings of peace and joy in the holy Spirit. Let us not, therefore, think that in giving up some of our liberties we would be losing the blessings and favors of the Gospel—quite the contrary, we have all the best things left to us, and may the more richly enjoy them by copying our Master's self-denial in *sacrificing* these little liberties.

And he that in these things (verse 18) surrenders his own rights and liberties, in his endeavor to serve Christ, serving some of the humble members of his body, is both acceptable with God and approved of men—not only will fellow-men appreciate such little sacrifices, on their behalf, but God also will appreciate them. Therefore, instead of contending about our rights and privileges and battling to have these, let us rather follow in the way that leads to peace and the things whereby we may become helps one to another as members of the Lord's body. Do not permit a question respecting your food, drink or clothing to destroy the work of God—either the work of the development of his grace in your own heart, or by breaking down the conscience of a weaker brother, destroy the work which grace has begun in him. Being free from the Mosaic law, we understand that all kinds of food are permissible, and none to be regarded as unclean, but if any one thinks that certain food is unclean (forbidden by God's command) it would be a sin for him to eat it, because he thus would violate his conscience.

Finally, brethren, the Apostle urges, it would be a good rule to follow, to refrain from either the eating of meat or the drinking of wine, or any other liberty whose exercise would likely do injury to another, either temporarily or permanently.

JUNE 27th—REVIEW

CALVARY

Through many a lovely landscape
My pilgrim-staff I've brought,
From many a rocky em'nence
My gaze the valley sought.
But far above all mountains
I've ever seen, give me
The quiet, lonely hillock,
The Mount of Calvary.

It towers not with forehead
Ice-crowned into the clouds.
No sunny Alpine glacier
Its shoulders bare enshrouds.
But ne'er in all my wanderings
Seemed heaven so near to me,
And earth so lost in distance,
As there on Calvary.

On its bald summit never
A crown of forest stood—
No gently waving oak-tops,
No precious cedar-wood.
But all the royal cedars
That Hermon once did see
Their lofty heads are bowing
Before Mount Calvary.

Go thither, earth-worn pilgrim,
There seek thy rest at last;
And at the feet of Jesus
Thy heavy burdens cast.
Then come and praise with gladness—
How much was done for thee!
Know this: the road to glory
Leads over Calvary.

—*From the German.*

ASPIRATIONS OF THE ROYAL PRIESTHOOD

O, let me give
Out of the gifts thou givest;
O, let me live
With life eternally because thou livest;
O, make me shine
In darkest places, for thy light is mine;
O, let me be
A faithful witness for thy truth and thee.

O, let me show
The strong reality of Gospel story;
O, let me go
From strength to strength, from glory unto glory;
O, let me sing
For every joy, because thou art my King;
O, let me praise
Thy love and faithfulness through all my days.
—*Frances Ridley Havergal.*

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

Many were surprised that after the widely published announcement that Archbishop Corrigan (Roman Catholic) would take a prominent part in the recent dedication of the Grant Monument, and that he would pronounce the closing benediction—he was afterward dropped from the arrangement and took no part. The explanation is now at hand. It appears that two of General Grant's sisters caused the change of program. The *Primitive Catholic* says:

"Mrs. Virginia Grant Corbin of Newark, and Mrs. J. Cramer of Orange, N. J., both sisters of General Grant, refused most emphatically to attend the ceremonies if any Roman Catholic prelate should be called upon to bless the sarcophagus and utter any of his benedictions.

"Then the great men in Washington and New York, the generals and patriots composing the committee on ceremonies, exercised much diplomacy and cunning, animated into activity on account of their cringing fear of offending the popish politicians and their master, but it was all of no avail. Those two American women held out; no compromise was possible with the resolute stand they had taken. The committee was obliged to concede the palm of victory to them and avert a national scandal, consisting of a most flagrant breach of trust, against the memory of the dead soldier, against his family and the nation at large."

PAPACY SEEKING NATIONAL PROMINENCE

During President Cleveland's administration the Roman Catholic church requested a grant of space on government ground at the United States Military Academy at West Point for the erection of a chapel. The permission was given, and forthwith foundations for a large church building were begun. But the press protested so vehemently against the providing of church sites by the general government that the permission was recalled and the work stopped.

The matter has come before the new administration, and it has decided that the church may be built; and that any other denomination desiring to build there shall also be granted a site; but the assumption is that not many Protestant denominations will accept the offer, since few of them would care to spend the money to build a structure that would compare favorably with the one now being started.

Romanism has for years been laboring to stamp its character and influence upon this government. To this end it has spent money liberally at our national Capital—for the great Catholic College and other church institutions. This move on West Point is in the same line; for, although comparatively few of the Cadets are Romanists, they recognize that influence upon them will be influence upon a class that some day will wield a pronounced influence in governmental affairs. They are zealous, too, in forwarding the interests of Catholic young men for admission to West Point. Protestants seem to think that Romanism has changed within the last century. She has changed her tactics, but not her principles; and that because she was losing her hold: she changed so as to take a fresh hold on the people's liberties. She will be a prominent figure in the time of trouble and will have the coöperation of many "Protestants" in efforts to maintain "the *present social order.*" Both Protestants and Romanists have for some time been moving to have the United States declared to be a "Christian nation;" and having at last unitedly succeeded, as represented in the decision of the United States Supreme Court, Romanism will be crafty enough to grasp her full share of the power.

HIGH-CHURCH OPINION OF SECTARIANISM

The rector of St. Ignatius' Protestant Episcopal church, New York City, Rev. Arthur Ritchie edits a monthly church journal. In a recent issue of this paper appears an editorial of which the following is an extract:

"As a matter of fact, could anything be more utterly contemptible than the great American sects? We do not refer to respectable religions, like the Presbyterian and the Lutheran, the fruit of the travail of the sixteenth century, but such low, time-serving, ignorant superstitions as the Baptist church, the Methodist Episcopal church, and the like. In the East these parvenu folk do not dare to raise their heads, or if they do they are laughed at for their pains. But no doubt in the West it is different, and quite possibly there a Baptist minister or a Methodist minister may consider himself as on an equality with the church clergyman! Should this be the case, a little 'arrogance' and 'superciliousness' would be very useful and highly commendable. Those who boast that they derive their office from the people should be made to know, if not to feel, that they are removed by an infinite chasm from those who derive their mysterious powers from above and are the vicegerents of heaven.

"Of course in matters non-ecclesiastical there should be Christian politeness shown to every one according to his position in life; but even in such matters dissenting ministers should be made to feel their inferiority."

This minister and editor is not well posted. We can assure him that *some* Methodist and Baptist congregations have in recent years come nearer to his conceptions of true Christianity—*i. e.*, become more arrogant and supercilious, and nearer to the Scriptural description of the Laodicean stage of the church—rich, increased in goods and having need of nothing; and knowing not that they are poor, blind, miserable and naked.—Rev. 3:16-19.

We much regret that all of the arrogance, etc., is not confined to Episcopaleans, Presbyterians and Lutherans; and we trust that the truly meek and humble in every quarter of Babylon will give earnest heed to the Lord's words, "Come out of her *my people;* that ye be not partakers of her sins and that ye receive not of her [chastisements] plagues."—Rev. 18:4.

THE "OVERPRODUCTION OF MINISTERS"

Not long since *The Evening Post* (New York) published an article advocating "A Society for the Decrease of the Ministry." Some of the arguments for fewer ministers were: "The all-pervasive restlessness and discontent" of the ministry, so great that "a prominent officer of a missionary society is reported to have said that in all his visitations of the clergy of a certain state he had failed to discover a single incumbent who did not wish to make a change;" "the underlying anxiety for prospective bread and butter;" the disgraceful "scramble for place," so that "a certain Congregational church in Connecticut, with by no means an inviting future, received not less than two hundred and fifty applications, scattered all the way from Maine to California;" the existence of a "dead line" beyond fifty years of age, and the growing "commercial basis of modern church life."

This question, started in England, is being much discussed here also. *The World* (New York) has interviewed some of the leading ministers and college professors on the subject, and we subjoin extracts from some of their replies:

The President of Andover Seminary, Rev. George Harris, D. D., said: "It is undoubtedly true that the ranks of the ministry are at present overcrowded. The number of unemployed clergymen is increased somewhat by reason of the protracted depression of business. Some of the small churches are not able to pay a living salary, and the missionary societies are obliged to reduce their working forces."

Rev. Dr. George Hodges of Episcopal Theological School, Harvard University, says: "It is true that every desirable vacant parish is pursued by an eager crowd of parsons, some of them being out of employment, others being discontented with their cures. It is true also that after middle life many ministers find the door of opportunity shut in their faces."

Rev. Lewis W. Mudge, D. D., Princeton, N. J., says: "The spirit of unrest so manifest in churches and among ministers is seen also in other professions and in business circles, and is the outcome of financial and social conditions."

Prof. Edward L. Curtis, Yale Theological Seminary, says: "The complaint that there is an oversupply of ministers might

be made of any of the learned professions as much as of the ministry.

"I do believe, however, that such schools as the Moody School and others of that kind, where only the English branches are taught, have had a tendency to send men into the ministry only partially equipped for the work, and that it has had a tendency to bring about a competition not desirable."

Dr. James O. Murray, Dean of Princeton University, says: "What the church wants is a higher *intellectual* standard. There are too many men in the ministry that could not prosper at anything else and do not succeed here."

Rev. Dr. John Hall said: "Regarding an oversupply of ministers, much may be said that is true, but no more true than of other professions. . . . What we need in the nation is not a reduction in the number of ministers, but an increase of spiritual power, of fidelity to the Master, of the teaching and preaching of the glorious Gospel, and of reliance on the guidance of the holy Spirit in the hearts of people and pastors."

We agree with Dr. Hall, that there are not too many ministers of the right kind—there are merely too many *professional* ministers. Every fully consecrated, humble Christian is a member of the "royal priesthood," commissioned to minister (serve) the truth to all who have ears to hear; to be ambassadors for God; to show forth the praises of him who has called them out of darkness into his marvelous light. Such were the ministers of the primitive church, and there cannot be too many of these God-ordained ministers of the sanctuary, who labor not for filthy lucre's sake, but gather fruit unto eternal life and await the Master's—"Well done, good and faithful servant [minister], enter into the joys of thy Lord."

The harvest is great and such laborers are far too few. Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he will send forth more laborers into his vineyard; and seek and pray that you yourself may be one of them. Of such ministers it is written: "They shall be all taught of God."

"SELF-DENIAL WEEK"

The Salvation Army in Great Britain has recently had a "self-denial week," the results of which are announced to be $124,000. This is the second week of the kind within a year. When returns are received from other parts of the world it is expected that the total will be a quarter of a million dollars.

We greatly admire the zeal of the "Army," and recommend that special efforts be made to put "present truth" before them favorably. We wonder whether clearer knowledge of the Lord and his goodness and gracious plan would lead them as it ought to redoubled energy in the service of so gracious a Master, or whatever it would cool their ardor and self-denial. The truth is a crucial test of our consecration, true love and devotion to our Lord. He *seeketh* such as worship and serve him in spirit and in truth—from love, not from fear. Let each reader ask himself, How is it with me?

WHAT SAYS THE SCRIPTURES ABOUT SPIRITISM?

PROOFS THAT IT IS DEMONISM

That which we believe to be the truth respecting Spiritism is antagonized from two standpoints: (1) The majority of people have no confidence in Spiritism, but believe its claimed manifestations and proofs are fraudulent. (2) An increasingly large number are disposed to deny the existence of the evil spirit beings called demons, and of the prince of demons, called in the Scriptures the devil and Satan.

Rev. Adam Clark, D. D., has well said:

"Satan knows well that those who deny his being will not be afraid of his power and influence; will not watch against his wiles and devices; will not pray to God for deliverance from the evil one; will not expect him to be trampled down under their feet, if he has no existence; and, consequently, they will become an easy and unopposing prey to the enemy of their souls. By leading men to disbelieve and deny his existence, he throws them off their guard. He is then their complete master, and they are led captive by him at his will. It is well known that among all those who make any profession of religion, those who deny the existence of the devil, are those who pray little or none at all; and are, apparently, as careless about the existence of God as they are about the being of the devil. Duty to God is with them out of the question; for those who do not pray, especially in *private*—and I never saw a devil-denier who did—have no religion of any kind, except the form, whatever pretentions they may choose to make."

If it be asked how Spiritism could do injury to those who consider its claims to be deceptions and frauds and its votaries to be dupes, we answer that a large majority of its votaries are those who at one time thoroughly and heartily denied its claims and considered them impositions. Those who most thoroughly disbelieve in Spiritism are often the *most ready to test* its professed claims; and when convinced that many of its claims are genuine and many of its manifestations supernatural, these former disbelievers are more liable to become its devotees: whereas, if they had known just what Spiritism is, and how and by what power it operates, they would be on guard, and their judgment would have a support and guidance which it otherwise lacks. It is the lack of the true knowledge of Spiritism (imparted through the Scriptures and confirmed) by indisputable evidences from outside the Scriptures) which causes so many to fall a prey to this delusion.

True, there are frauds committed in the name of Spiritism; but these are chiefly in connection with attempted "materializations." That Spiritists have done and can do, through some power or agency, many wonderful works beyond the power of man, has been abundantly proved in a variety of cases—some of them before scientific men, total unbelievers. Tambourines have been played while in the air beyond the reach of human hand and suspended by some invisible power; chairs have been lifted into the air while people were sitting upon them, and without any connection with any visible power or agency; mediums have been floated through the air, etc. The rapping tests, the table-tipping tests, the autograph tests and the slate-writing tests have been *proved* over and over again, to the satisfaction of hundreds of intelligent people in various parts of the world. And Spiritism reckons amongst its adherents judges, lawyers, business men and numbers of women of ability. These people have tested the claims of Spiritism and have candidly avowed their faith in it. And it is unwise, to say the least, to sneer at such as fools or knaves—fools if simply deluded by tricks and slight of hand; knaves if they are willingly and knowingly lending their time and influence to the perpetration of frauds.

The writer was inclined to be skeptical with reference to all the various claims of Spiritism until convinced to the contrary by a Christian man, in whose testimony he was justified in having full confidence. This friend was not a believer in Spiritism, but being thrown into the company of some Spiritists for an evening, the suggestion was made, "Let us have a seance." The company present assented, our friend remaining from curiosity. They sat down to a table, placed their hands upon it in the usual manner, and one of the number present being a medium, inquired: "Are there any spirits present?" The answer indicated by raps upon the table—one for A, two for B, three for C, etc., spelled out the information that spirits were present, but that they would hold no communication that evening. The medium asked, "Why?" The answer rapped out was, "Because new mediums are being appointed all over the United States." The company was disappointed and, through the medium, asked that as a test the name of some prominent person dying that night should be communicated. The request was complied with and the name of a Russian dignitary, which we cannot now recall, was spelled out. This was before the Atlantic cable was laid, and my friend, anxious to test the matter, kept watch of the newspapers and finally, nearly a month after (the time requisite for Russian mails in those days) he saw the announcement of the death of the Russian notable bearing that very name.

Our friend was convinced that Spiritism was not all a "hoax," and was anxious for another meeting. When it took place, in view of the answer at the previous meeting, the medium inquired, "Are there any mediums present? and if so, how many?" The answer was, "Four." The medium asked the spirit to please indicate which four of those present were mediums, and as each one called his name the mediums were indicated by a rap upon the table by some invisible agent. Our friend was one of those indicated and right proud he felt of the honor. This occurred in Wheeling, W. Va. Shortly after he came to Allegheny, Pa., and visited an aunt, a widow, who with her family resided here. Anxious to display his newly conferred powers as a medium, he asked his aunt and her daughter to join him in a "seance." They were surprised, and the daughter said: "Why, are you a medium? I am a rapping medium also, brother Harry is a tipping medium and mother is a writing and trance medium." Our friend had never witnessed the powers of any but rapping

mediums, and was very anxious that his aunt should display the powers of her mediumship, and was shown writing done by her which was an exact fac-simile of his dead uncle's autograph upon checks. And strange, too, his uncle wrote a fine hand, while his aunt could not write at all, except under this influence.

Wishing to test her powers as a talking medium, the three surrounded a small table, and the aunt called for a spirit to communicate through her. The answer given was that there would be no communication, because there were no unbelievers present to convince. They persisted, however, and got the aunt to call again for the spirit. The answer this time was that her hands were forcibly lifted from the table and brought down upon it with a bang. This was something surprising to them all. The spirits evidently were provoked at the pertinacity of a second call after their refusal. But after discussing the matter for some ten minutes our friend prevailed upon his aunt to call again for the spirits and see what else would happen. She complied, and in response her hands were lifted from the table and brought down with fearful concussion, three times in rapid succession, sounding as though every bone would be broken; and with her eyes staring out wildly and shrieking Oh! Oh; Oh! she jumped from the table in a semi-delirious condition.

That spirit, whoever it may have been, was evidently angry and wanted it understood that it could not be trifled with. Our friend informs us that never after that would his aunt have anything to do with Spiritism as a medium—she had caution enough to let it alone. But our friend was anxious to witness the powers of a "tipping medium," and in the evening, when his cousin Harry came home, he insisted on having an exhibition of his mediumship. Harry complied and amongst other tests was the following: He placed a small, light table in the center of the floor and said: "I call for the spirit of our old dog Dash to come into this table." Then addressing the table, he said: "Come Dash!" The table balanced itself on two feet and hobbled after him around the room.

I should here remark that our friend, who vouches for these matters, will no longer exercise any of his powers as a medium. He is a prominent Christian man now living in this city. His views with reference to Spiritism are now the same that we are here endeavoring to present.

The *claim* of Spiritists is that these manifestations and communications from unseen intelligences are from human beings, who once lived in this world, but who, when *seeming to die*, really became more alive, more intelligent, freer, and every way more capable and competent than they had ever been before. It is claimed that the purpose of these manifestations is to prove that *the dead* are *not dead*, but alive; that there is no need of a resurrection of the dead, because there are no dead—the dead being more alive than ever, after passing into what is termed death. We shall not stop here to show how inharmonious all this is to the testimony of Scripture upon this subject, but merely cite the reader to the Word of the Lord; reminding him that "If there be no resurrection of the dead, . . . then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are *perished*."—1 Cor. 15:13, 18; Job 14:21; Psa. 146:4; Eccl. 9:5, 6.

Here is the point of infatuation. As soon as the unbeliever in Spiritism has been convinced that an unseen intelligence communicates through the medium, he is all interest. Nothing else offers such *proofs* from invisible sources as does Spiritism; and many seem not only willing but anxious to walk by sight rather than by faith. Every one has friends who have died, and thousands are anxious to communicate with them if possible, and to receive from them some message or some advice. It is not surprising, therefore, to find people greatly absorbed in these matters, and very willing to be directed by those whom they esteem their truest friends and most competent advisers.

They visit a medium for the purpose of holding communication with the dead. The medium describes the hair, the eyes, etc., and certain little peculiarities, such as a mole or an injured or deformed finger or foot (which the father or son or sister or wife identifies as the description of the loved one deceased) and delivers a message which, however vague or indefinite, is construed to be very important. The novices are filled with a sort of reverent joy, mixed with a humble feeling of the inferiority of their own condition, and with a pride that they have been counted worthy to receive communications from "the spirit world," while so many good and great people are not so favored, but are "blind to the wonderful facts of Spiritism." The feelings thus started are somewhat akin to some kinds of *religious feelings*, and straight way the "converts" are ready to believe and obey the advice and instructions of those whom they believe to be so much wiser and holier than themselves, and so deeply interested in their welfare, present and eternal, as to leave the joys and ministries of heaven to commune with them and instruct them.

The majority of people have no true Christian faith built upon the foundation of the Word of God: they have *a wish* for a future life, and *a hope* with reference to their dead, rather than *a faith* with reference to either. As a consequence, their minds being convinced that they have had communication with those beyond the grave, everything relating to the future life becomes more real and more interesting to them than ever before. And many such, wholly ignorant of religious feelings, say to themselves, Now I know what it is to have faith, and they congratulate themselves that they have received a great spiritual blessing.

But this is only the first lesson, and these comparatively uplifting experiences belong chiefly to it. Later experiences will demonstrate, as all Spiritists will freely acknowledge, that there are "evil spirits," "lying spirits," which time and again deceive them; and the messages and revelations, often foolish and nonsensical, gradually lead the investigator to a disbelief of the Bible and the Creator, while it teaches and exalts "the spirits" as the only sources of knowledge aside from nature; and thus the way is paved toward advanced lessons on "spirit-affinities," "free love," etc. But after the first deception and shaking of confidence the explanation that there are "both good and bad spirits" is generally satisfactory; and the poor victim follows blindly on, because assured that he communes with some supernatural power.

As an illustration of this we mention the case of an old gentleman, a Pittsburger, an avowed Spiritist and an earnest defender of Spiritism. We knew something of his history through a mutual friend; how that, while holding a communication through a medium, supposedly his "evoluted" wife, the latter said to him: "John, I am perfectly happy only for one thing, and that is on your account." He answered, "O, Mary, do not allow my affairs to mar your bliss! I am comparatively happy for an old man and comparatively comfortable." But the answer came: "O no, John, I know better. I know that you are lonely, very lonely, that you miss me very much, and are suffering from lack of many little attentions; and that your home is comparatively dreary." Mr. N. had full confidence in Mary's judgment, and the message carried great weight; and his home and its affairs gradually grew less happifying, and he gradually grew dissatisfied; and so at a subsequent "seance" he inquired of Mary what he could do that would relieve her burden and make her bliss complete. She replied that he should find a suitable companion and re-marry. But the old gentleman (seventy years old) objected, that even if he could find a suitable companion, such a one would not have him. But at frequent interviews the supposed spirit of his wife insisted, and as he thought further over the matter he grew more lonely, and finally asked Mary to choose for him, as she had so much better judgment than any earthly being could have on the subject. The medium affected great indignation at the answer, and would not communicate it at first. The more she objected to giving the answer, the more anxious Mr. N. became to have it, and finally the medium explained that the spirit of his wife had said that Mr. N. should marry her (the medium); but that she was indignant that the spirit should think that she would marry an old man like him.

But the more Mr. N. thought the matter over, the more he was inclined to be, as he supposed, led by the good spirit of his wife into ways of pleasantness and into paths of peace; and he urged upon the medium that it was the duty of humanity to obey the behests of their best friends in the "spirit world." Finally the medium consented that if he would deed over to her what property he possessed she would agree to follow the directions of the spirit and marry him. The matter was consummated in legal form, and Mr. N., with his medium wife and her daughter, proposed to make the formerly cold and cheerless home of Mr. N. all that this spirit-wife had wished for him. It was a very short time, however, before the poor old gentleman was very glad to abandon home and all, to get free from the two "she-devils," as he afterward knew them.

But did not this shake the confidence of Mr. N. in Spiritism? By no means. He merely communicated with his wife again through another medium and was informed that a lying spirit had misrepresented her entirely, and that she had given no such bad advice. Knowing these facts concerning his history, when we met him shortly after, and he tried to urge upon the writer the claims of Spiritism, we said to him: "Mr. N., we will admit that Spiritism is backed by some

super-human phenomena, but we deny that the powers which communicate represent themselves truthfully. They claim to be friends and relatives who once lived in this world, but the Scriptures assure us to the contrary of this that there is no work or knowledge or device in the grave, and that the dead know not anything. (Eccl. 9:5, 10) They declare that the only hope of a future life is by a resurrection from the dead. You know, Mr. N., that whatever these powers may be which claim to be the spirits of your friends, their testimony is entirely unreliable. You cannot believe their most solemn declarations. They are what the Scriptures term "lying spirits." We proceeded to give him, as we are about to give in this article, the identity of these spirits as set forth in the Scriptures. He heartily assented that some of the spirits were unreliable, "thoroughly bad," but claimed that others were very good, very truthful, and had frequently given good advice, which had been very helpful to him.

It is claimed by many Spiritists, especially by novices, that the influence of Spiritism is elevating; but those who have passed through the various stages of experience in this so-called religious system have found, and have publicly declared, that its influence is quite the reverse of elevating—it is demoralizing.

The *method* of operation is explained by *The Banner of Light*, a leading Spiritist paper, in answer to the query, thus:

"Q.—Where a spirit controls the hand of medium to write, is the impression always made through the brain?

"A.—Sometimes the control is what is termed mechanical control; then the connection between arm and brain is entirely severed, and yet the manifestation is made through what is called the nervous fluids, a certain portion of which is retained in the arm for the purpose of action. But when the manifestation is what is called an impressional manifestation, then the brain and entire nervous system is used."

Explaining the difference between Mesmerism and spirit control, another journal, the *Spiritual Age*, says:

"Suppose *I* magnetize *you* today; and that I, the mesmerizer, speak, write, act through you, you being unconscious —this is Mesmerism. Suppose, further, that I die tonight, and that tomorrow I, a spirit, come and magnetize you, and then speak, write, act through you—this is Spiritualism [Spiritism]."

The value of Spiritism to the world is thus summed up by the well known Horace L. Hastings:

"According to the theory of Spiritualists, there are a hundred times as many disembodied spirits about us as there are men in the flesh. Among them are all the poets, authors, orators, musicians and inventors of past ages. They know all they ever knew when they were in the flesh, and have been learning a great deal more since; and with their added powers and extended experience they should be able to do what mortals have never done before. They have had free access to the public mind and public press, with no end of mediums ready to receive their communications, and thousands and thousands of inquirers who have anxiously questioned them, and earnestly desired to obtain information from them. They have had tables and slates and pens and pencils and banjos and pianos, and cabinets and bells and violins and guitars; and what have we to show for it all? Their business in this world has been to instruct men, to help them, to make them wiser and better. They have talked and rapped; they have tipped and rattled; they have fiddled and scribbled; they have materialized and dematerialized; they have entranced and exhibited; they have told us many things which we knew before; many things which we do not know yet, and many other things which it was no matter whether we knew or not; but when we come to real instruction, reliable information, or profitable and valuable knowledge, Spiritualism is as barren as Sahara, as empty as a hollow gourd."

WHO ARE THESE SPIRITS WHICH PERSONATE THE DEAD?

We have in the Scriptures most abundant and most positive testimony that no communication could come from the dead until after the resurrection. Furthermore, we have positive Scripture testimony (1) that not only some, but all, of these spirits are "evil spirits," "lying spirits," "seducing spirits." The Scriptures forbid that humanity should seek to these for information, and clearly inform us that these demons or "devils are "those angels which kept not their first estate"—some of the angels to whom was committed the supervision of mankind in the period before the flood, for the purpose of permitting them to endeavor to *lift mankind out of sin;* that by their failure all might learn that there is but one effectual remedy for sin; *viz.*, that provided in Christ. These angels, instead of uplifting humanity, were themselves enticed into sin, and misused the power granted them, of materializing in human form, to start another race. (Gen. 6:1-6) Their illicit progeny was blotted out with the flood, and themselves were thereafter restrained from the liberty of assuming physical bodies, as well as isolated from the holy angels who had kept their angelic estate inviolate.

The Apostle Peter (2 Pet. 2:4) mentions these, saying, "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell [*Tartarus*] and delivered them into *chains of darkness*, to be reserved unto judgment." Jude (6) also mentions this class, saying, "The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation [proper condition] he hath reserved in everlasting chains—*under darkness* unto the judgment of the great day." Notice three points with reference to these evil angels.

(1) They are imprisoned in *Tartarus*, restrained, but not destroyed. *Tartarus* is nowhere else rendered "hell," but in this one passage. It does not signify the grave, neither does it signify the second death, symbolized by the "lake of fire and brimstone;" but it does signify the air or atmosphere of earth.

(2) They have some liberties in this imprisoned condition, yet they are chained, or restrained, in one respect—they are not permitted to exercise their powers in the light being "under chains of *darkness*."

(3) This restriction was to continue *until* "the judgment of the great day," the great Millennial Day—in all a period of over 4,000 years. As we are now in the dawning of the Millennial day—"the great day"—it is possible that this should be understood to mean that some of these limitations as to *"darkness"* may ere long be removed, gradually. If so, if the "chains of darkness" should be released, it would permit these evil spirits to work deceptions or "lying wonders" in the daylight (as they are now attempting to do) to the delusion of mankind more than ever has been known since the flood.

These fallen angels, or demons, are not to be confounded with Satan the prince of demons, or devils, whose evil career began long before—who was the first, and for a long time the only, enemy of the divine government; who, having been created an angel of a superior order, sought to establish himself as a rival to the Almighty, and to deceive and ensnare Adam and his race to be his servants; and a large extent, for a time at least, he has succeeded, as all know. As "the prince of this world," who "now worketh in the hearts of the children of disobedience," he has indeed a very multitudinous host of deceived and enslaved followers. Naturally he would appreciate the deflection of the "angels who kept not their first estate," and who were restrained at the time of the flood; and hence he is spoken of as their chief, "the prince of devils;" and no doubt as a superior order of being he exercises some degree of control over the others.

These fallen angels, "demons," have probably very little to interest them amongst themselves;—evil beings apparently always prefer to make game of the purer, and apparently take pleasure in corrupting and degrading them. The history of these demons, as given in the Scriptures, would seem to show that the evil concupiscence which led to their fall, before the flood, still continues with them. They still have their principal pleasure in that which is lascivious and degrading; and the general tendency of their influence upon mankind is toward working mischief against the well-disposed, and debauchery of those over whom they gain absolute control.

We are well aware that many Christian people have reached the conclusion that the Lord and the apostles were deceived, when they attributed to the works of demons conduct that is now considered *human propensity* and mental unbalance and fits. But all should admit that if our Lord was in error on this subject, his teachings would be an unsafe guide upon any subject.

Notice the *personality* and intelligence attributed to these demons in the following Scriptures: "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well; devils also *believe* and *tremble*." (Jas. 2:19) Do human propensities "believe and tremble?" The demons said to our Lord, "Thou art Christ, the Son of God! And he, rebuking *them*, suffered *them* not to speak [further], for *they knew* that he was Christ." (Luke 4:41) Another said, "Jesus *I know* and Paul *I know*, but who are ye?" (Acts 19:15) The young woman from whom Paul cast out the *spirit* of soothsaying and divination (Acts 16:16-19) is a good illustration. Can it be claimed by any that the Apostle deprived the woman of any proper talent or power? Must it not be confessed to have been a *spirit* which possessed and used her body?—an evil spirit unfit to be tolerated there?

Many of those who claim that the demons of the Scriptures were the spirits of wicked men and women who died, and that these are the "lying spirits" acknowledged by Spiritists, have still another difficulty;—for generally they claim that the spirits of wicked dead go to hell-torments, as they

wrongly interpret *sheol* and hades to mean.* If so, how could they be so much at liberty?

"Witchcraft," "Necromancy," the "Black art," "Sorcery," etc., are supposed by many to be wholly delusions. But when we find that they had a firm hold upon the Egyptians, and that God made special provision against them with Israel, we are satisfied that he made no such restrictions either against that which is good, or against that which had no existence whatever. The instruction to Israel was very explicit: they should not have any communion nor make any inquiries through necromancers (those who claimed to speak for the dead; *i. e.*, spirit-mediums); nor with any wizard or witch; nor with any who had occult powers, charms; nor with those who work miracles by means of sorcery and incantation.—Read carefully all of the following Scriptures,—Exod. 22:18; Deut. 18:9-12; Lev. 19:31; 20:6, 27; 2 Kings 21:2, 6, 9, 11; 1 Chron. 10:13, 14; Acts 16:16-18; Gal. 5:19-21; Rev. 21:8; Isa. 8:19, 20; 19:3.

The Bible story of King Saul's "seance" with the witch of Endor, a necromancer or spirit-medium, as related in 1 Sam. 28:7-20, is an illustration of what is claimed to be performed today. Altho the law with reference to these mediums was very strict and the punishment death, there were some who were willing to risk their lives because of the gains which could thus be obtained from people who believed that they were obtaining supernatural information from their dead friends—just as with spirit-mediums today. King Saul was well aware that there were numerous of these mediums residing in Israel contrary to the divine injunction and his own law, and his servants apparently had no difficulty in finding the one at Endor. Saul disguised himself for the interview, but no doubt the crafty woman knew well the stately form of Saul—*head and shoulders taller than* any other man in Israel. (1 Sam. 9:2) Hence her particularity to secure a promise and oath from his own lips that no harm should befall her for the service.

The methods used by the evil spirits through the medium at Endor were similar to those in use today. They caused to pass before the medium's mental vision the familiar likeness of the aged prophet, Samuel, wearing as was his custom, a long mantle. When she described the mental (or "astral?") picture, Saul recognized it at once as descriptive of Samuel; but Saul himself saw nothing—he "perceived," from the description, that it was Samuel. Easily convinced, as people under such circumstances usually are, Saul did not stop to question how it could be that Samuel looked as old and as stooped as he looked in the present life, if he was now a spirit being and far better off; nor did he inquire why he wore the same old mantle in the spirit world that he had worn when he knew him as an earthly being. Saul had been forsaken by the Lord and was now easily deceived by these "lying spirits," who personated the prophet and spoke to Saul in his name, through their "medium," the witch, necromancer, Spiritist.

The fallen spirits are not well informed in respect to all the affairs of the earth, but they are adepts in deceit. In answering Saul, the manner and style, and as nearly as could be judged the sentiments of the dead prophet were assumed—the better to deceive. (Thus these "lying spirits" always seek to counterfeit the face manner and disposition of the dead.) The response was, "Why hast thou *disquieted* me to bring me *up?*" This answer corresponds to the Jewish belief—that when a person died he became unconscious in "*sheol*," the grave, waiting for a resurrection. (Job 14:12-15, 21; Psa. 90:3; Eccl. 9:5, 6) Hence the representation is that Samuel was brought *up* from the grave, and not *down* from heaven; and that his *rest* or peaceful "sleep" was disturbed or "disquieted."—Psa. 13:3; Job. 14:12; Psa. 90:5; John 11:11, 14.

Saul was easily deceived into thinking that the Prophet Samuel who had refused to visit him to have any further converse with him while alive, had been *forced* to commune with him, by the wonderful powers of the witch. (See 1 Sam. 15:26, 35) Saul's own testimony was, "God is departed from me and answereth me no more, neither by prophets, nor by dreams."—1 Sam. 28:6, 15.

Any rightly informed person will readily see the absurdity of supposing that Samuel would hold any conference whatever with Saul under the circumstance. (1) Samuel (when living) was aware that God had forsaken Saul, and hence Samuel had no right to speak to him and no right to give him any information which the Lord was unwilling to give him. And Samuel would not do so. (2) It is thoroughly absurd to suppose that a spirit-medium under condemnation of the Lord and prohibited of the right of residence in the land of Israel could have the power at the instance of a wicked king, whom God had deserted, to "disquiet" Samuel and to bring him "*up*" out of *sheol*. Was Samuel down *in* the earth, or was he afar off in heaven? and had the witch the power in either case to command him to present himself before King Saul to answer his question? Or is it reasonable to suppose that any spirit-mediums have the power to "disquiet" and "bring up" or in any other manner cause the dead to appear to answer the speculative questions of the living?

The "familiar spirit" of the witch, personating Samuel, foretold nothing which Saul himself did not anticipate. Saul knew that God's word had been passed that the kingdom should be taken from him and his family, and he had sought the witch because of his fear of the Philistine hosts in battle array for the morrow. He expected no mercy for himself and his family, God having told him that David would be his successor. He even anticipated, therefore, the statement which was the only feature connected with this story that indicates in any degree a supernatural knowledge: *viz.*, "Tomorrow shalt thou and thy sons be with me: the Lord also shall deliver the host of Israel into the hands of the Philistines." The well-informed demons knew full better than did Saul the strength of the Philistines' position and army, and the weakness of Saul's position and army, and that he himself was already panic stricken and making this inquiry of the witch-medium because he was distracted at the situation. Any one familiar with the warfare of that time would know (1) that one day's battle would probably settle the question; and (2) that the death of the king and his household would be the only logical result. Nevertheless, the "familiar spirit" erred, for two of Saul's sons escaped and lived for years. It is even denied by scholars that the battle and the death of Saul occurred for several days after the visit to the witch.

It is not surprising that Satan and the fallen angels, his consorts in evil, should know considerably more than do men, concerning many of life's affairs. We must remember that by nature they are a higher, more intelligent order than men; for man was made "a little lower than the angels" (Psa. 8:5): besides, let us remember their thousands of years of experience, unimpaired by decay and death, as compared with man's "few years and full of trouble," soon cut off in death. Can we wonder that mankind cannot cope with the cunning of the "wicked spirits," and that our only safety lies in the divine provision that each one who so *wills* may refuse to have any communication with these demons? The Word of the Lord is, "*Resist* the devil, and he will flee from you." (Jas. 4:7) "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring [angry] lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: *whom resist*, steadfast in the faith."—1 Pet. 5:8, 9.

But while able to tell *past* and *present*, these evil intelligences are quite unable to do more than guess at the *future*. Yet these guesses are often so skillfully stated as to satisfy the inquirer and yet appear true, if the result should be the opposite of his expectation. Thus the oracle of Delphi having been consulted by Crœsus demonstrated to him a super-human knowledge of *present* things, and when he, having thus gained confidence in it, inquired through its *mediums*, "whether he, should lead an army against the Persians," the answer as recorded by Herodotus the historian was "By crossing the Halys, *Crœsus will destroy a mighty power!*" Relying upon this, Crœsus attacked the Persians and was defeated. His *own mighty power* was destroyed! History is full of such evidences that the demons know not the future; and God's Word challenges all such, saying,—

"Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth and *show us what shall happen*. Let them show the former things [things *before* or *to come*] what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things for to come. *Show the things that are to come hereafter, that we may know that ye are gods.*"—Isa. 41:21, 23.

But *where* was Samuel the prophet, if Saul would be *with him* the day following? Clearly the meeting place would not be heaven, for wicked Saul was surely unfit to enter there (John 3:5); nor could the meeting be in a place of flames and torment, for surely Samuel was not in such a place. No; the "familiar spirit" spoke to Saul from the standpoint of the general faith of that time, taught by Samuel and all the patriarchs and prophets,—namely, that

* See "What Say the Scriptures About Hell—" a pamphlet in which every text of Scripture containing the word *hell* is cited and examined in the light of Scripture and reason, together with other Scriptures and parables supposed to teach eternal torment. Price 10 cents. For sale by WATCH TOWER BIBLE & TRACT SOCIETY, Allegheny, Pa.

all who die, good and bad alike, go to *sheol*, the grave, the state of death, the sleep from which naught can awaken except the resurrection power of Michael, the arch-angel (Dan. 12:1, 2);—except it were claimed that the witch's "familiar spirit" could awaken the dead in advance,—but this, as we are showing, was a deception, a fraud, the "lying spirit" personating the dead and answering for Samuel.

Of this passage Charles Wesley wrote—

"What do these solemn words portend?
A gleam of hope when life shall end?—
Thou and thy sons shall surely be
Tomorrow in repose with me:—

Not in a state of hellish pain,
If Saul with Samuel remain:
Not in a state of damned despair,
If loving Jonathan be there."

One remarkable thing in connection with the manifestations of these fallen angels, or "demons," is that people of ordinary common sense are so easily deceived by them, accept such flimsy proofs respecting the dead, which they would not accept respecting the living. The inquirer will accept through the medium a description which fits to the individual and his manner, clothing and appearance years before, and will hold sacred a message purporting to come from him, whereas the same individual would be more on guard against deception by a living impostor, and his message through a servant.

The mention in the Scriptures of these necromancers, witches and mediums, leads us to infer that through mediums they were for centuries seeking fellowship with the Israelites. But it is apparently the custom to change the manner of manifestation from time to time: just as witchcraft flourished for a time in New England and Ohio, and throughout Europe, and then died out and has been succeeded by Spiritism, whose tipping and rapping manifestations are gradually giving way to others, clairaudience and materialization being now the chief endeavors, the latter, being very difficult and the conditions often unfavorable, are often accompanied by mediumistic assistance and fraud.

OBSESSION AT THE FIRST ADVENT

In the days of our Lord and the early church the method of operations on the part of these demons had changed somewhat from the practices in the days of Saul, and we read nothing in the New Testament about witches, wizards and necromancy, but a great deal about persons possessed by devils—*obsession*. Apparently there were great numbers thus possessed through-out the land of Israel: many cases are mentioned in which our Lord cast out devils; and the power to cast them out was one of those conferred upon the twelve apostles, and afterward upon the seventy that were sent out. The same power was possessed and exercised by the Apostle Paul.—See Luke 9:1; 10:11; Acts 13:8-11; 16:18.

Mary Magdelene, we remember, had been possessed of seven devils (Luke 8:2), and being set free from their control, she became a very loyal servant of the Lord. Another instance is mentioned in which a legion of spirits had taken possession of one man. (Luke 8:30; 4:35, 36, 41) No wonder that his poor brain, assaulted and operated upon by a legion of different minds, would be demented. This tendency of these fallen spirits to congregate in one person indicates the desire they have still to exercise the power originally given them; namely, the power to materialize as men. Deprived of this power they apparently have comparatively rare opportunities of getting possession of human beings. Apparently the *human will must consent* before these evil spirits have power to take possession. But when they do take possession apparently the *will power* is so broken down, that the individual is almost helpless to resist their presence and further encroachment, even tho he so desires. Our Lord intimates such a condition (Matt. 12:43-45), suggesting that, even after an evil spirit had been cast out and the heart swept and garnished, if it were still empty, there would be danger of the return of the evil spirit with others to re-possess themselves of the man;—hence the necessity for having Christ enthroned within, if we would be kept for the Master's use, and be used in his service.

Apparently these evil spirits have not the power to impose themselves, even upon dumb animals, until granted some sort of permission: for, when the "legion" was commanded to come out of the man whom they possessed, they requested as a privilege that they might have possession of the bodies of a herd of swine; and the swine being according to the law unclean to the Jew, and unlawful to eat, the Lord permitted them to have possession of them, doubtless foreseeing the results, and with a view to giving us this very lesson.

The same Apostle who speaks of these evil spirits as "lying wonders" and "seducing spirits" (1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Thes. 2:9; compare Ezek. 13:6; 1 Kings 22:22, 23) tells us that the heathen sacrificed to these demons. (1 Cor. 10:20) And so, indeed, we find that in various parts of the world there are demon manifestations. Amongst the Chinese these demon powers are frequently recognized, and sacrifices are offered to them; so also in India and in Africa. Amongst the North American Indians in their savage state these evil spirits operated after much the same manner as elsewhere. An illustration is given by Missionary Brainard in a *"Report to the Honorable Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge,"* explanatory of the difficulties and obstacles to the spread of Christianity among the Indians with whom he had been laboring, as follows:—

"What further contributes to their aversion to Christianity is the influence which their *powaws* (*conjurer or diviners*) have upon them. These are a sort of persons who are supposed to have a power of *foretelling future events*, or *recovering the sick*, at least often, and of *charming*, *enchanting*, or *poisoning persons to death* by their *magic* divinations. Their spirit, in its various operations, seems to be a Satanic imitation of the spirit of prophecy with which the church in early ages was favored. Some of these diviners are endowed with the spirit in infancy;—others in adult age. It seems not to depend upon their own will, nor to be acquired by any endeavors of the person who is the subject of it. . . . . They are not under the influence of this spirit always alike,—but it comes upon them at times. Those who are endowed with it are accounted singularly favored.

"I have labored to gain some acquaintance with this affair of their *conjuration*, and have for that end consulted and queried with the man mentioned in my Diary, May 9, who, since his conversion to Christianity, has endeavored to give me the best intelligence he could of this matter. But it seems to be such a *mystery of iniquity*, that I cannot well understand it, and do not know oftentimes what ideas to affix to the terms he makes use of. So far as I can learn, he himself has not any clear notions of the thing, now his spirit of divination is gone from him.

"There were some times when this spirit came upon him in a *special* manner. Then, he says, he was *all light*, and not only *light* himself, but it was light all *around him*, so that he could see through men, and knew the thoughts of their hearts. These *"depths of Satan"* I leave to others to fathom or to dive into as they please, and do not pretend, for my own part, to know what ideas to affix to such terms, and cannot well guess what conception of things these creatures have at these times when they call themselves *all light*. But my interpreter tells me that he heard one of them tell a certain Indian the secret thoughts of his heart, which he had never divulged. . . .

"When I have apprehended them afraid of embracing Christianity, lest they should be enchanted and poisoned, I have endeavored to relieve their minds of this fear, by asking them, Why their *powaws* did not enchant and poison me, seeing they had as much reason to hate me for preaching to them, and desiring them to become Christians, as they could have to hate them in case they should actually become such? That they might have an evidence of the power and goodness of God engaged for the protection of Christians, I ventured to bid a challenge to all their *powaws* and *great powers* to do their worst on me first of all; and thus I labored to tread down their influence."—*Memoirs of Brainard*, pages 348-351.

Three months since the *New York Sun* published the following account of the experiences of Capt. C. E. Denny, Indian agent for the Canadian Government among the Blackfeet Indians. Capt. Denny says:—

"On my arrival in the northwest territories with the northwest mounted police, in 1874, I was curious to find out how far these "medicine men" carried their arts, and also what these arts consisted of. I heard from Indians many tales of wonders done by them, but it was a long time before I got a chance to be present at one of these ceremonies. The Indians were reluctant to allow a white man to view any of their "medicine" ceremonies. As I got better acquainted with several tribes, particularly the Blackfeet, I had many chances to find out the truth regarding what I had heard of them, and I was truly astonished at what I saw at different times. Many of the medicine feats did not allow of any jugglery, the man being naked, with the exception of a cloth around his loins, and I sitting within a few feet of him.

"All Indians believe in their *familiar spirit*, which assumed all kinds of shapes, sometimes that of an owl, a buffalo, a beaver, a fox, or any other animal. This spirit it was

that gave them the power to perform the wonders done by them, and firmly believed in by them all.

"On one occasion I was sitting in an Indian tent alone with one of the "medicine" men of the Blackfeet Indians. It was night and all was quiet in the camp. The night was calm, with a bright moon shining. On a sudden the Indian commenced to sing, and presently the lodge, which was a large one, commenced to tremble: and the trembling increased to such a degree that it rocked violently even lifting off the ground, first on one side and then on the other, as if a dozen pair of hands were heaving it on the outside. This lasted for about two minutes, when I ran out, expecting to find some Indians on the outside who had played me a trick, but to my astonishment, not a soul was in sight, and what still more bewildered me was to find on examination that the lodge was firmly pegged down to the ground, it being impossible for any number of men to have moved and replaced the pegs in so short a time. I did not enter the lodge again that night, as the matter looked, to say the least, uncanny.

"On another occasion I visited a lodge where a "medicine smoke" was in progress. There were about a dozen Indians in the lodge. After the smoke was over, a large copper kettle, about two feet deep, and the same or a little more in diameter, was placed empty on the roaring fire in the middle of the lodge. The medicine man who was stripped, with the exception of a cloth around his loins, was all this time singing a "medicine" in a low voice.

"The pot after a short while became red-hot, and a pole being passed through the handle, it was lifted in this state off the fire and placed on the ground, so close to me that the heat was almost unbearable. On the pole being withdrawn the medicine man sprang to his feet and, still singing his song, stepped with both naked feet into the red-hot kettle and danced for at least three minutes in it, still singing to the accompaniment of the Indian drums. I was so close, as I have before said, that the heat of the kettle was almost unbearable, and I closely watched the performance, and saw this Indian dance for some minutes with his bare feet in it. On stepping out he seemed none the worse; but how he performed the act was and is still a mystery to me."

Similiar feats are performed by the *fetish* men of India "under control;" and tests given by "spirit mediums" "under control" sometimes include the handling of fire, red hot glass, etc., with bare hand without injury. God has protected his faithful in the flames (Dan. 3:19-27), and it seems that he does not always hinder Satan's use of such power.

Dr. Ashmore, of long experience as a missionary in China, says,—

"I have no doubt that the Chinese hold direct communications with the spirits of another world. They never pretend that they are the spirits of their departed friends. They get themselves in a certain state and seek to be *possessed by these spirits*. I have seen them in certain conditions invite the spirits to come and to inhabit them. Their eyes become frenzied, their features distorted, and they pour out speeches which are supposed to be the utterances of the spirits."

An old issue of *Youth's Day Spring* contains a letter from a missionary describing the condition of the Africans on the Gaboon river at the approach of death. He says,—

"The room was filled with women who were weeping in the most piteous manner, and calling on the spirits of their fathers and others who were dead, and upon all spirits in whom they believed, Ologo, Njembi, Abambo, and Miwii, to save the man from death."

A Wesleyan missionary; Mr. White, says,—

"There is a class of people in New Zealand called Eruku, or priests; these men pretend to have intercourse with departed spirits."

No part of humanity has been exempted from the attacks of these demons, and their influence is always baneful. India is full of it. So generally accepted at one time was the belief in demon-possession, that the Roman Catholic church, through her priests, regularly practiced "exorcism," or casting out of demons.

The very earliest recorded spirit manifestation was in Eden, when Satan, desiring to tempt mother Eve, used or "obsessed" the serpent. Mother Eve claimed that she was deceived by the serpent's misrepresentations. God allowed the claim as true, and sentenced the serpent, which there became the symbolic representative of Satan. As the father of lies he there took possession of a serpent to deceive Eve and lead her to disbelieve God's command by the false assurance, "Ye shall not surely die!" so ever since, tho he has varied his methods and mediums, all of them are to deceive—to blind the minds of mankind, *lest* the glorious light of the *goodness of God*, as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, should shine unto them.

Thanks be to God for the promise that, in due time, the kingdom of God shall be established in the earth, in the hands of our Lord Jesus and his then completed and glorified church, and that one of the first works of that kingdom, preparatory to its blessing "all the families of the earth," will be the binding of that old Serpent, the Devil and Satan, that he may *deceive* the nations no more for the thousand years of Christ's reign; until all men shall be brought to a clear knowledge of the truth, and to a full opportunity to avail themselves of the gracious provisions of the New Covenant, sealed at Calvary with the precious blood of Christ.

While the name old serpent includes Satan, "the prince of devils," it is here evidently used as a synonym for all the sinful agencies and powers which had their rise in him. It therefore includes the legions of "evil spirits," "familiar spirits," "seducing spirits."

Spiritism, as a deceiving influence under the control of Satan, is foretold by the Apostle Paul. After telling of the work of Satan in the great Apostacy of which Papacy is the head-center, the Man of Sin, the Mystery of Iniquity,* the Apostle draws his subject to a close by pointing out that Satan, toward the end of this age, will be granted special license to deceive by peculiar arts, all who, having been highly favored with the Word of God, have failed to appreciate and use it. He says,—"For this cause God will send them strong delusion [a working deception], that they may believe a lie: that they may all be condemned, who believed not the *truth*, but had pleasure in unrighteousness [doctrinal or practical]." —2 Thes. 2:11, 12.

We shall not be at all surprised if some later manifestations of the powers of darkness, transformed to appear as the angels of light and progress, shall be much more specious and delusive than anything yet attempted. We do well to remember the Apostle's words—"We wrestle not with flesh and blood, but with princely powers of darkness, with the spiritual things of the evil one."—Eph. 6:12.

In 1842, six years before "*modern* Spiritism" began to operate, Edward Bickersteth, a servant of God and student of his Word, wrote,—

"Looking at the signs of the times, and the long neglect and unnatural denial of all angelic ministration or spiritual influence, and at the express predictions of false Christs, and false prophets, *who shall show signs and wonders, insomuch that if it were possible they should deceive the very elect*, and that when men *receive not the love of the truth that they might be saved, for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they shall believe a lie;* I cannot but think there is a painful prospect of a SUDDEN RECOIL and religious revulsion from the present *unbelief* and *misbelief*, to an unnatural and undistinguishing CREDULITY."

Satan is the inspirer and supporter of every anti-Christ and as he led those who had pleasure in error rather than the truth to the organization of the great anti-Christ, Papacy, symbolically the "beast" of Rev. 13, and as he is now operating to produce a Protestant "image of the beast" with *life*, which will coöperate with the chief anti-Christ, so in combination with these will be the powers of darkness, the powers of the air, the lying and seducing spirts, operating in some manner or in a variety of ways,—Spiritism, Christian Science, Theosophy, Hypnotism, etc.

Rev. Father Coppens, M. D. [Roman Catholic], Professor in Creighton University, recently delivered a discourse on "Borderland of Science," from which we extract the following on the phenomena of Spiritism:—

"What must we think of the nature of Spiritism, with its spirit rappings, table-turnings, spirit apparatus and so on? Can the facts, which are not imposture, but realities, be explained by the laws of nature, the powers of material agents and of men? All that could possibly be done by the most skilled scientists, by the most determined materialists who believe neither in God nor in demon, as well as by the most conscientious Christians, has only served to demonstrate to perfect evidence that effects are produced which can no more be attributed to natural agency than speech and design can be attributed to a piece of wood. One principle of science is that every effect must have a proportionate cause. When the effect shows knowledge and design, the cause must be intelligent. Now many of these marvels evidently show knowledge and design, therefore the cause is certainly intelligent.

"A table cannot understand and answer questions; it cannot move at a person's bidding. A medium cannot speak in a language he has never learned, nor know the secret ailment

* See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II, chapter 9, pages 267–366.

of a patient far away, nor prescribe the proper remedies without knowledge of medicine. Therefore these effects when they really exist, are due to intelligent agents, agents distinct from the persons visibly present, invisible agents therefore, spirits of another world.

"Who are these agents? God and his good angels cannot work upon these wretched marvels, the food of a morbid curiosity, nor could they put themselves at the disposal of pious men to be trotted out as monkeys on the stage. The spirits which are made to appear at the seances are degraded spirits. Spiritualists themselves tell us they are lying spirits. Those lying spirits say they are the souls of the departed, but who can believe their testimony, if they are lying spirits as they are acknowledged to be? This whole combination of imposture and superstition is simply the revival in modern dress of a very ancient deception of mankind by playing on men's craving for the marvelous. Many imagine these are recent discoveries, peculiar to this age of progress. This spirit-writing is and has been for centuries extensively practiced in benighted pagan China, while even Africans and Hindoos are great adepts at table turning. It is simply the revival of ancient witchcraft, which Simon Magus practiced in St. Peter's time; which flourished in Ephesus while St. Paul was preaching the gospel there. It is more ancient still. These were the abominations for which God commissioned the Jews in Moses' time to exterminate the Canaanites and the other inhabitants of the promised land."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

THE GOSPEL SENT TO EUROPE

JULY 4.—ACTS 16:6-16.

"The entrance of thy words giveth light."—Psa. 119:130.

After the conference at Jerusalem respecting the obligations of the Law upon Christians, we noticed that Jude and Silas returned with Paul and Barnabas to Antioch, to deliver the decision of the Council. After remaining with the Antioch church for several months the Apostle Paul proposed to Barnabas that they revisit the churches of Asia Minor, which they had established during the first preaching tour. The Apostle was thoughtful of the interests of the general work, and remembered the necessity of watering as well as sowing the truth. Experience is convincing that this thought is correct, and that it is just as true today as then that beginners in the Christian way need the careful oversight of those who are more advanced, that they may become rooted, grounded, established and built up in the truth.

The necessity for doing something to center and develop the interest of beginners is very generally recognized today, but with many the thought seems to be that the beginner needs to get into the current of what is termed "Christian work," but what in reality is very largely animal excitement. We may be very certain that the Apostle's thought was not with reference to getting up some little excitement and entertainment for the "babes" in Christ, such as strawberry festivals, apron sociables, gossip societies and other entertainments to attract the world, at ten cents a head, for the Lord's cause. These were not the considerations which moved the Apostle to suggest the new tour. He had a more important work than this; he thought of the newly interested believers, the opposition with which they would have to contend among their former friends, the false arguments and sophistries which would be raised by the adversary to combat the truth; the inexperience and perplexities of the Lord's flock, and he needed to go amongst them to encourage, strengthen and establish them in the truth and make of them strong soldiers of the cross.

Barnabas readily assented to the proposed tour, but before they had proceeded far in the arrangement, a difference of opinion arose between the two which, however, has been very greatly exaggerated, we think, by many Commentators. We hold that they did not have a "quarrel, bitter and angry;" that they did not "part in anger;" that it is not true that "neither would yield to the other, and therefore both were wrong." Quite to the contrary, we think that each had a right to act according to his own judgment of the Lord's will in the matter under discussion; and that a sharp discussion, in which each would be positive, should not with Christians signify any bitterness or acrimonious feeling.

The point of the discussion was, whether or not John Mark (cousin of Barnabas and writer of the Gospel of Mark) should go with them on this journey. We saw in our lesson of May 2 that Mark forsook the service of the ministering brethren (Paul and Barnabas) in their first tour, and Paul evidently thought that up to this time Mark had not properly recognized his misconduct on that occasion, and hence was determined that the assistant on this occasion should be some one upon whom they could place greater dependence. Barnabas, on the contrary, stood up for Mark, and as a result they determined that it would be best to make two parties instead of one. The evidence seems to be that Barnabas was rather the loser by not acquiescing with the Apostle Paul's view of the matter; for altho Barnabas and Mark started on a preaching tour, its importance and success were comparatively much less than attended the ministries of Paul: so much so that no particular report of it is given, and Barnabas thereafter is almost lost from sight.

That Paul's conduct was not the result of any unkind feeling toward either Barnabas or Mark is evident from the fact that in one of his subsequent epistles he mentions Barnabas most kindly; and a little farther on we find Mark one of Paul's associates in the work. Presumably he had learned the lesson which the Apostle thought he needed to learn. However, as a result of their candid differences of view, as Dr. Stalker puts it, Paul had to part "from the man to whom he owed more than to any other human being; and Barnabas was separted from the grandest spirit of the age." "They never met again."

Paul chose Silas, whose full name was Silvanus, one of the brethren sent from Jerusalem after the conference, to be his companion and helper; and they started northward from Antioch, then turned westward to Derbe, then to Lystra, where the company was joined by young Timothy. Altho Timothy's mother was a Jewess, his father being a Greek he had never been circumcised. Paul, foreseeing that he would be a valuable assistant in the work, recommended that, according to the Jewish custom, Timothy be circumcised, and thus become in the fullest sense a Jew according to the custom divinely enjoined upon that nation.

Paul has been sharply criticised for his course in this matter by some who consider that his action here directly contradicted his testimony to the Galatians—"If ye be circumcised Christ shall profit you nothing." (Gal. 5:2:6) But these critics fail to notice an important feature; namely, (1) that circumcision was established before the Mosaic Law was given at Sinai; (2) that it was a national mark, and that any Jew who was not circumcised, forfeited by that neglect his rights in the Abrahamic promise. (3) The Galatian Christians, who were told that they must not be circumcised, were not Jews, and had nothing to do with Israel's national sign; and for them to perform circumcision would indicate that they were seeking for divine favor by becoming Jews and coming under the Jewish laws and regulations, and that they were not trusting fully to Christ. (Gal. 2:14-16) (4) A Jew on the contrary, while trusting in Christ, could properly enough conform to the national usage of circumcision established before the Law.

Having passed from the province of Galatia in which were located the cities of Antioch, Lystra and Derbe, the Apostle evidently here intended going into the province called Asia, a part of what is known as Asia Minor, but the holy Spirit hindered them and forbade that course. How this instruction of the spirit was communicated we are not informed; and no matter, since we have confidence that the Apostle was not following mere impressions, but made sure that he was under the divine guidance. They next thought to go into the province of Bithynia, but again they were hindered, and so passed by Mysia; that is, they passed through the province of Asia without preaching therein, and came to the seaport of Troas, thinking there to take shipping, but apparently uncertain as to which direction the Lord would have them go.

Here the Lord's leading was very distinct: in a dream the Apostle Paul saw a man of Macedonia beckoning to him and saying, "Come over and help us." This settled the Apostle respecting the course he should take. The Lord was leading him, but evidently chose to delay the full and clear information respecting his route, that the Apostle (and the church in general through this account) might realize the more fully how directly God was leading and providentially guiding in the presentation of his truth. The Apostle and his company immediately prepared to go to Macedonia in obedience to the Lord's indication.

Thus the Lord specially directed the word of his grace to Europe. Instead of sending it northward and eastward through Asia—to the millions in Asiatic Russia and India and

China, and instead of sending it southward to the other millions in Egypt and all Africa, the Lord specially guided his truth norwestward into Europe. Who cannot see that a great question was in the balances, and was here divinely decided?

Let it be remembered, too, that, in sending the gospel into Europe, the Lord chose first of all the most enlightened parts of Europe. Macedonia lies just north of Greece, and their peoples were practically one: their intelligence and civilization were practically on a par. Only a short time before, Greece, under Alexander the Great, had conquered the world, and Greek civilization and the Greek language and Greek philosophies had thus been spread among all civilized people. And altho subsequently the Cæsars of Rome had conquered Greece, they had not destroyed the influence of the Greek literature and philosophy, which still dominated at the time of our lesson. In sending the gospel into Macedonia, therefore, the Lord was sending it to the people most advanced in civilization and the arts. After starting the work in Macedonia and in Greece, the good tidings were later sent to Rome, and from these, then the centers of civilization, the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ has spread northward through Europe and westward through America, and has been the instrumentality for producing the highest types of civilization that the world has ever known; and this in proportion as the Word of God has been free, and has been received into honest hearts.

In Macedonia, by the spirit's leading, they went first to one of the principal cities, Philippi, and there on the Jewish Sabbath they found by the river side a prayer meeting. The women who were attending it were probably all Jewesses, and the Apostle concluded that those who were seeking the Lord in worship and prayer would be in the best condition of heart to be approached with the gospel: a judgment which experience since in every land, endorses as correct. Paul's discourse concerning the hopes of Israel and the fulfilment of these in Jesus the Messiah, and the story of his crucifixion for our sins, found a lodgment in the hearts of some who heard it. This was the start of the church at that city, to which later Paul wrote—the Epistle to the Philippians.

The brief reference to Lydia, one of the believers, is worthy of notice. Her heart being touched with the message of the gospel, she esteemed it a privilege to serve and entertain those whom the Lord had been pleased to honor as servants in carrying to her his message. We have here a good lesson of thankful appreciation and hospitality.

IMPROVED SPELLING

The National Educational Association has given its formal approval to the reformed spelling of the following words as here given: Program, tho, altho, thoro, thorofare, thru, thruout, catalog, prolog, decalog, demagog, pedagog.

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

As the hour draws near, indicated by the prophetic hands of the great clock of the ages, when "Gentile Times" shall end and God's kingdom shall take control of earth's affairs, with the natural seed of Abraham as its earthly representatives, in the Land promised to Abraham (Acts 7:5), every intelligent student of prophecy naturally watches the events bearing upon the promised land and the covenant people.

It is just about a year since Dr. T. Herzl, a learned Hebrew of Vienna, published his book advocating the foundation of a "Jewish State," in Palestine, the old homestead, as the only practical solution of the "Jewish question." His views, now known as "Zionism," have been taken up by leading Jews and Jewish journals the world over, and while some opposition has been aroused it is wonderful how general is the Jewish sentiment in favor of the project.

Rabbi Stephen Wise, of New York, says of the movement:—

"The Zionists here and everywhere, however, are thinking of the homeless in Israel. Ours it is to plan and toil, not for ourselves alone, but even for those whose existence is threatened by the passions and prejudices of the different peoples among whom their lots are cast. Have we not witnessed the oft-repeated triumphs of 'scientific' anti-Semitism at the German polls? Few are the nations which are wholly friendly to the children of the stock from which sprang Jesus of Nazareth.

"Enlightened and God-fearing Christendom will marvel at the spectacle of a comparatively small band of heroes venturing upon a task of appalling magnitude. Were all Christendom truly Christians, there were little or no need of this movement. But Zion must be rebuilt, because the law that went forth therefrom hath not prevailed among all of its professors. In the meanwhile I doubt not that the American people will, with characteristic admiration for personal and national heroism, applaud and God-speed the hardy and hopeful upbuilders of a new Zion."

Dr. Moses Gaster of London, Chief Rabbi of the "Sephardim" Jews of all Southern Europe, said recently, respecting Dr. Herzl's Zionist proposition:—

"I feel a very keen interest in the scheme, dating back from the time when I was living in Roumania, and was instrumental in founding the first Jewish colony in Palestine. I have always cherished the conviction that the future of the Jewish race lies there, and nowhere else. I regard Dr. Herzl's scheme not as a politico-economical idea, but rather as a religious one. It is impossible to divorce such a plan from the religious ideals which underlie it. On the practical details he has developed I refrain from pronouncing an opinion, because it is impossible to say what form the movement will assume when once the masses are stirred with enthusiasm. I presided some months ago at a mass meeting of fifteen hundred East End London Jews, and nothing could have exceeded the enthusiasm at Dr. Herzl's appearance. It is the masses that decide such questions."

Delegates representing Jewish societies in all parts of the world have already been chosen, to meet August 25th in the city of Munich, Germany, to consider the most practical steps to be taken for the attainment of the aims of Zionism. The following prominent Jews are in charge of the convention,—Dr. T. Herzl, Max Nordau, C. Montefiore, Dr. DeHaas.

How remarkable that such a movement should take place at the present time! When in 1878 we pointed out that according to prophecy the set time for the return of divine favor to Israel was then due to begin and that the beginning was in the putting of Egypt and Palestine measurably under British protection by the Berlin Conference, the idea was scouted by many. When we declared that the return of Israelites to Palestine was the next step, the Jews themselves scoffed, declaring that to be an absurdity: that the Jew in Germany was a German, in England an Englishman and in the United States an American, and so elsewhere the world over.

When the Russian persecution drove thousands to seek other homes, Palestine was spurned as a barren land. Baron Hirsch, the German millionaire, started with lavish expenditure a new land of promise in Argentina, South America; and wealthy American Hebrews helped their brethren by thousands to the United States. But some of the poorest Russian Jews looked longingly to Palestine and went thither —to find the land dry and barren enough. However, for these God raised up friends in Sir Moses Montefiore and Baron Rothschild who, seeing their destitution, pitied them and started Industrial Schools and Experimental Gardens for their instruction, hospitals for the sick, etc.

Then came the decree of the Sultan that no more Jews be permitted to settle in Palestine; and shortly the Russian persecution abated, and a few years of quiet followed in which affairs have been *developing* and the Jews have learned certain lessons. (1) The Argentine colony, backed by millions and under seemingly most favorable conditions, has not been a success but a great failure, financially and every way. The Jews colonized there are dissatisfied. (2) The Jews brought to the United States have succeeded only fairly well. (3) The Jews who went to "barren" Palestine have prospered phenomenally. As if by magic the land became more fruitful and happy, and gives evidence of a permanent revival. As a result the eyes of all Israel are turned Zionward, and their watchword is Zion! Zion! Verily, O Lord—"Thy people shall be *willing* in the day of thy power." Surely, in this we have another distinct evidence that we are in "the Day of Jehovah."—See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. I., Chap. 15.

Seeing this trend of events with Israel, we look in another direction to see in what way the Lord will open the gates to permit their return. And as we can now see a providence and blessing in the retarding of their emigration for a time, until the divine favor upon the land should center upon it the interest of all Jews, we shall expect *ere long* to see the

[illegible] that many not only of the poor, but [illegible] will seek Palestine as a home. [illegible] as the Zionists do, that they [illegible] an independent Jewish state. [illegible] end of Gentile times— in the [illegible] 1914. [illegible] MILLENNIAL DAWN, Vol. II, Chap. 4.

Turkey still rules over Palestine, and [illegible] her to feel a greater independence than she has felt for nearly a century. She is concentrating troops in Europe from her Asiatic provinces, and the great powers fear a war, while all are striving for peace. The Grand Vizier of the Empire, the Sultan's Prime Minister, has recently expressed himself as follows, as reported by the *London Standard*:—

"My great age, and the confidence shown in me by appointing me the Grand Vizier of so glorious a Caliph, embolden [illegible] question of the day. [illegible] portant [illegible] you, has now [illegible] fore, [illegible] in an [illegible] Europe [illegible] II, [illegible] and only [illegible] but we shall alienate our Mussulmans. Therefore I implore your Majesty, for the sake of your victorious ancestors, [illegible]."

Various [illegible] and differences of interest [illegible] the great powers of Europe [illegible] Turkey [illegible] Turkey rather than let [illegible] etc., etc.

There are not lacking other [illegible] of European complications which some consider much more dangerous to peace. For instance, the German Emperor is credited with [illegible] qualities of [illegible] English-men and Americans [illegible].

The London *Spectator* says:—

"The German Emperor is credited with a project for uniting the whole Continent in a war with England, which—says one scribe supposed to be inspired—would afford to each power engaged a magnificent compensation. The league is to be for plunder. . . . Emperor William II. is almost as formidable an enemy as Napoleon, and we [illegible] that he will not ultimately succeed in organizing a coalition of some kind the motto of which will be *Delenda est Carthago*. . . . We shall not have a long warning of a [illegible]."

Another influential journal says:—

"The Emperor of Germany will have to be reckoned with whether in Africa or Europe, and in the [illegible] developments that are pending it is not to St. Petersburg, Paris or London that one must look for a clew, but to Berlin."

An Amsterdam journal, *Handelsblatt*, voices the sentiments of many of the [illegible] of America. It says:—

"It seems to us that a coalition against England is in formation not unlike that created by Napoleon I., and that England assists in the work by estranging her friends [illegible] her colonial and financial policies, and leaving her army in its present condition. We hope we are mistaken. Nothing more terrible could be imagined than a victory of the autocrats over free England and her noble people. For, after all, that people remains one of the wonders of the world, [illegible]."

But Great Britain has able statesmen who doubtless will guard her interests and conciliate France and Russia. However, we see various national complications possible, any one of which would be tolerably certain to affect the future of Palestine and open its gates to the natural seed of Abraham,—preparatory to its becoming the Capital of the world.

But whether it comes peaceably or by war, we expect Palestine to be open to Israel in less than five years. Nor do we expect that any war that might occur (for we do not anticipate a great war), would be the predicted great turmoil that will wreck the present social order.

THE DIAMOND JUBILEE

The whole world has echoed and re-echoed joyous congratulations to England's Queen, jubilating the sixtieth year of her reign. Literary men have striven with each other to see how much could be said in praise of the lady and of her reign. The period of reign has even been styled "The Victorian Age"—after the olden style; as for instance "The Augustan Age" was a term applied to the reign of Augustus Cæsar.

We have great respect for the royal lady and great appreciation of the blessings of the past sixty years; but we are far from supposing that the latter were dependent upon the former. In the days of the Cæsars one man could do much to [illegible] for good or for bad upon the art, the literature, the finances, the [illegible] and everything pertaining to his reign. [illegible] attempting to stamp his personality upon Germany.

Great credit is due Queen Victoria for not attempting to rule the British Empire in any particular. Contenting herself with [illegible] of royalty she has done the very [illegible] the government, wholly in the hands of Parliament, the representatives of the people;—so far as we recall not even once exercising royal prerogatives, of veto, etc. Any king on the same throne, who would have stamped no personality upon his epoch, would have been despised by his subjects as lacking character; but [illegible] the Queen non-interference in the government and non-personality of reign shall be esteemed [illegible]. Had a man been on the throne, all of his subjects would have insisted that he have some policy of his own, and among people like the English and Americans, as [illegible] views as enemies and opponents. This would have led long ago either to [illegible] and less liberty as in Germany, or else to a republican form of government, as in France and the United States.

No, the blessings of the past sixty years are not to be credited to kings and queens, nor to republics, but to God. As already pointed out in MILLENNIAL DAWN, the great [illegible] period named "The Day of His Preparation," began in 1799 and will end with 1914; and it is the advancement of this "day" and the light which God provides, necessary for the work, that has brought the wonders of the present, and is rapidly now bringing on the conditions for the great time of trouble for the overthrow of present imperfect conditions and the establishment of the kingdom of God's dear Son.

THE WEST POINT CHURCH

The permit to proceed with the construction of the Roman Catholic church on Government property contiguous to the West Point Military School has been cancelled. The question of the authority of the Secretary of War, under the Constitution, was referred to Attorney General McKenna (a Roman Catholic), who, much to the disappointment of Roman Catholics, decided that the Secretary of War has no right to permit the erection of any building for sectarian purposes, at West Point. The Constitution certainly guards carefully against union of church and state.

Many great Americans seem to have foreseen danger along this line. President Grant said—"Keep church and state forever separate." President Jackson said—"It is wicked and tyrannical to compel any man to support a religion in which he does not believe." President Garfield said—"The division between church and state should be absolute." Benjamin Franklin said—"A religion that depends on the state for support is for that reason a bad religion."

Nevertheless, we foresee a practical union, or at least a co-operation, [illegible] the result of which will be [illegible] religious sentiments not prominent, popular and influential.

CHURCH UNION PROGRESSING

The English church, having been rebuffed by the pope, is making progress with the Greek church of Russia. We noted the attendance of the Bishop of London at the Czar's coronation in full mediæval regalia of gaudy robes, cap, mitre, pastoral staff, episcopal ring, etc., and later the visit of the Archbishop of York to Russia, presumably in the interest of union between the Greek and English churches. Now we notice that the Greek church has sent the Archbishop of Finland to attend, as its representative, the ceremonies of the Queen's Jubilee, and in addition to attend the Lambeth Conference, which meets shortly in the interest of Union.

NON CONFORMISTS HONORER

As an olive-twig to the "Nonconformists," as Protestants in general are designated in Great Britain, Rev. Dr. Barret was invited to and did "read the Scripture lesson" at the Jubilee Service. This, however, as some churchmen point out, *does not signify* a recognition of nonconformist ministers as being duly ordained; for any "layman" might be called upon for that service under English church rules.

Alas! how little the real ordination, the real ministry, the real union, and the real church are understood;—how sadly and blindly all these questions are confused by the "Babylonians."

WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES ABOUT SPIRITISM?

PROOFS THAT IT IS DEMONISM—Continued

MODERN SPIRITISM AND ITS TENDENCIES

The claim of spiritists is that Spiritism is the new gospel which is shortly to revolutionize the world—socially, religiously, politically. But, as we have just seen, Spiritism, under various garbs, has long held possession of the world and borne bad fruit in every clime. It is nearly fifty years since the rapping and tipping manifestations first occurred, in Rochester, N. Y. (1848), and gave start to what is at present known in the United States as "Spiritualism." It began with strange noises in a "haunted house" and first answered a little girl who addressed the unseen author of the noises as "Old Splithoof." It had a rapid run of popularity, and judges, doctors, lawyers and ministers and hundreds of thousands of others speedily became its votaries, until its friends and its enemies claimed that its adherents numbered over ten millions. Believing in the consciousness of the dead, ignorant of the Scripture teachings on the subject of death and of their prohibition from holding communion with "mediums;" and very generally disbelieving in evil spirits, it is not surprising that intelligent men and women, having proved to their own satisfaction that supernatural powers were in their midst, as manifested by the rappings, tippings, slate-writings, answers to questions through mediums, clairvoyances, etc., should believe these invisible powers, which desire to converse with them, to be what they profess,—their deceased friends. Even allowing that there are certain tricks of legerdemain, and certain frauds along similar lines, we cannot wonder that intelligent people would believe their own senses in respect to instances which they had personally investigated.

As a result, for a time many of God's people were in great danger, because of their failure to take heed to the sure Word of God's testimony (the Bible) on this subject. Indeed, the personating spirits seem at first to have been very careful in all their references to the Bible, sometimes advising the religious ones who attended seances to do *more reading of the Bible, more praying*, etc. But this was only to allay their suspicions and fears and to get them more fully under their influence. Gradually the teachings became more and more lax, and the student was given to understand that the Bible was better than nothing to the uninitiated world, but to those who had come to have intercourse with the spirits direct, the Bible was useless,—and worse, a hindrance.

Well has an able writer upon the subject said of Spiritism,—

"A system which commences with light, innocent, trifling and frivolous performances and communications, but which ends in leading its followers to deny "the Lord that bought them," and to reject the Word of God which liveth and abideth forever, gives evidence that there may be a deep purpose under all its fantastic tricks; and that the craft of the old serpent, who is a liar from the beginning, may underlie those trifling and unimportant communications which, by stimulating curiosity and inspiring confidence, lull to slumber the suspicions of honest but undiscerning souls, until they are in the fatal coils of the enemy of all righteousness."

These demons who personate the dead, seeing that a new dispensation is opening, were prompt to apply their knowledge as far as possible to the advancement of their own cause, and freely declared a new dispensation at hand, and Spiritism the guiding angel which was to lead mankind safely into it; and they have not hesitated to declare that the new dispensation means the utter wreck of the present social order, and the establishment of Spiritism as the new order. In some instances, where they thought it would serve their purpose, they have not hesitated to declare the second coming of Christ, and on one occasion at least it was distinctly stated that Christ had come a second time: and it was intimated that they were ready if any one chose to grant communication with Christ through the medium.

Many of God's people have been saved from being ensnared into this great evil, by what we might term their *own spiritual sense*, by which they discerned that there was something in connection with Spiritism quite at variance with the spirit of our Lord and the sentiments of his Word. We may safely conclude, however, on the strength of the Lord's promise, that none of the fully consecrated—the "elect" are suffered to be fully ensnared.—Matt. 24:24.

The strongly marked tendency of Spiritism toward free-loveism served to bring it into general disrepute amongst the pure minded, who concluded that, if the influence of the dead was properly represented in some living advocates of Spiritism,—then the social conditions beyond the vale of death must be much worse, much more impure, than they are in the present life, instead of much better, as these demon spirits claim.

We could make voluminous quotations from Spiritist writings, proving that it totally denies the Bible, and that it is in direct opposition to its teachings; that it has denied the very existence of God, teaching instead merely a *good principle*, and that every man is a god. It denies the atonement and the Lordship of Christ, while it claims that he was a spirit medium of low degree; and furthermore, abundant testimony could be quoted from prominent spiritists proving that the tendencies of Spiritism are extremely demoralizing. We will content ourselves with one.

Here is the testimony of J. F. Whitney, editor of the *Pathfinder* (N. Y.). Having been a warm and evidently an honest defender and advocate of Spiritism for a long time and well acquainted with its devotees, his is a testimony hard to impeach. He says:—

"Now, after a long and constant watchfulness, seeing for months and years its progress and its practical workings upon its devotees, its believers, and its mediums, we are compelled to speak our honest conviction, which is, that the manifestations coming through the acknowledged mediums, who are designated as rapping, tipping, writing and trance mediums, *have a baneful influence upon believers*, and create discord and confusion; that the generality of these teachings inculcate false ideas, approve of selfish individual acts, and endorse theories and principles which, when carried out, *debase* and make man *little better than the brute*. These are among the fruits of modern Spiritualism. . . .

"Seeing, as we have, the gradual progress it makes with its believers, particularly its mediums, from lives of *morality* to those of *sensuality* and *immorality*, gradually and cautiously undermining the foundation of good principles, we look back with amazement to the radical change which a few months will bring about in individuals; for its tendency is to approve and endorse each individual act and character, however good or bad these acts may be."

He concludes by saying—"We desire to send forth our warning voice, and if our humble position, as the head of a public journal, our known [former] advocacy of Spiritualism, our experience, and the conspicuous part we have played among its believers, the honesty and fearlessness with which we have defended the subject, will weigh anything in our favor, we desire that our opinions may be received, and those who are moving passively down the rushing rapids to destruction, should pause, ere it be too late, and save themselves from the blasting influence which those manifestations are causing."

So bold and outspokenly immoral did some of the prominent representatives of Spiritism become, especially the female mediums (and most of its mediums are females) that the moral sense of civilization was shocked; and for a time demonism under the name of "Spiritualism" languished. Now that its past is measurably forgotten or denied, it is reviving, but along somewhat different lines. The new method seems to be to have less tipping and rapping and fewer special

mediums, or rather to make of each believer a medium, by the use of mechanical appliances. Indeed, almost all who become investigators are assured that *they* would make excellent mediums: this flattery is no doubt intended to lure them on; the ability to do "wonders" having a great fascination, especially for people of naturally mediocre talents. Nor is the statement untrue: none but idiots are so stupid or so ignorant that they cannot be used as *mediums;* and they may become powerful mediums in proportion as they yield themselves obediently to the "control" of these "seducing spirits" and their "doctrines of devils (See 1 Tim. 4:1) and are "led captive" by Satan at his will.—2 Tim. 2:26.

The term "seducing spirits" exactly fits the case. From amusement of curiosity and answering of questions, sometimes quite truthfully, they proceed to gain the confidence of their victims, and in a plausible manner to break down the will power and make slaves of them. Then they tyrannize in a most diabolical manner, leading into excesses of various kinds. Should conscience rebel or an attempt be made to get free from this slavery, all reserve is cast aside and the victim is taunted with his fall, persuaded that there is no hope for him, and that his only future pleasure must be in diabolism—Scriptures being skillfully quoted and cited to apparently prove this.

A case of this kind came under the writer's observation in 1895. A gentleman who had occasionally attended on preaching asked that an interview be granted his sister whom he would bring from Cleveland for the purpose. She was, he said, laboring under the delusion that she had committed the unpardonable sin, and he hoped we could disabuse her mind of the thought which sometimes made her "wild." We consented, and she came. She conversed rationally enough but assured us that her case was hopeless. We explained the Scriptures relating to the "sin unto death" and endeavored to show her that she had never had sufficient light to come under its conditions, but we could make no headway. She declared that she had been in a salvable condition once, but was so no longer.

She told us how she had met in California a man who had a familiar spirit and occult powers: at first disbelieving, she afterward became his co-worker in "mysteries" resembling witchcraft, and had finally inveigled and injured a dear female friend. Since then remorse had seized her, and she had been tortured and at times frenzied and hope had forever fled. Before she left us she seemed comforted a little by what we told her of divine compassion and the abundant provision made in the great *ransom* for all, given at Calvary. But we have heard since that she lost hope again and has been placed in an asylum to hinder her from taking her own life. She could not be trusted alone: she would attempt to throw herself headlong from a window, or while quietly walking the street would attempt to throw herself under passing vehicles;—reminding us of the case mentioned in Mark 9:22. We have regretted, since, that instead of merely reasoning with the poor woman we did not, also, in the name of the Lord, *exorcise* the evil spirit which evidently possessed her; or, failing to cast it out, at least have instructed and helped her to exercise her will power to resist the demon.

There are good spirits, as the Scriptures freely declare; and these holy angels are charged with the care of all who are fully consecrated to the Lord. These, however, do not operate in darkness, nor through "mediums," and have better employment than tipping tables, rapping out answers to foolish questions and *entertaining* humanity. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Heb. 1:14) There is no warrant, however, for seeking or expecting communications from these holy guardian angels: God's will being that his "elect" shall walk by faith and not by unusual manifestations or sights or sounds. To this end he has prepared his Word as a storehouse of knowledge from which his faithful shall be supplied with "meat in due season;" and he declares it to be *sufficient* that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto *every good work.*—2 Tim. 3:17.

Furthermore, it may be set down as a sure sign of *evil* (either germinating or developed), for any one to attempt to get control of the will and mind of another—as in mesmerism, spirit-mediumship, hypnotism and the like. The Lord respects our individuality and appeals to it, and urges our *self*-control in harmony with the principles of righteousness laid down in his Word. But Spiritism asks an abandonment of *self*-control in favor of *spirit* control. No one of ordinary prudence would dare to give up the use and control of his mind and will to fellow men, much less to unseen powers which *merely profess* to be good and great and wise. No Christian who has the slightest confidence in the Bible as the inspired Word of God should submit himself to these influences as a "medium," or even become an "investigator" of that concerning which God's Word has given us so explicit warnings—that it is a way that leads from God and righteousness to sin, and ruin, mental, moral and physical.

One of the simple modern devices for awakening interest and *leading on* to fuller "mediumship," "possession" and "control," is described in a letter just received, dated March 11, '97, from a Christian lady, a school teacher in Georgia, and a deeply interested student of God's plan of the ages. The writer says:—

"I have been having a rather strange and perhaps unwise experience lately. My husband's brother is a spiritualist, takes the *Progressive* (?) *Thinker* and is thoroughly imbued with its teachings, and, when I visit there, he reads articles from it and asks my opinion concerning them; especially those from persons claiming to have received messages from 'departed friends' through the aid of the mediums. Now I never have thought it 'all humbug' as many do, though there is much fraud connected with it—for it seems to me that the Bible plainly teaches that spirits have had, and will have, the power to communicate with men. I have told him that I believed those communications came from fallen angels who personated the dead for the purpose of deceiving men into believing Satan's old lie, "Thou shalt not surely die." But as my brother-in-law does not accept the Bible as the Word of God, my opinion had little weight with him. His wife (who is a firm believer in DAWN) is much troubled over his belief; and both have found their difference of opinion anything but pleasant, though his wife avoids the subject as much as possible with fidelity to the truth. Some time ago he bought a *Psycograph*, an instrument used by mediums for communing with spirits, but he could not use it.

"A few days ago it was placed in my hands, and, as I found I was a medium, I resolved to 'try the spirits.' [This is a misapplication of Scripture, as shown later.—EDITOR.] About the first thing it said to me was that there is a valuable gold mine on our place: that did not surprise me, as we had been told that a 'vein' had been traced across the place. It described the exact location to dig for it; said it is only 7½ feet below the surface. So that will not be difficult to prove. Then it gave me some Scripture messages, Col. 1:4, 5 and 2:4. I asked what was meant by 'enticing words' and was answered, Bellamy, Christian Science, Spiritualism, Ingersolism, etc. I asked who was talking, and was told Epaphras. That did not seem to please my brother-in-law very much, and he said he would like to hear from some one we had known in the flesh, so I asked if such an one were present, and was told, 'Yes, Eastman' (a stranger to me, but my brother-in-law and his wife, who alone were present, were both acquainted with him). When asked what he wished to say he cited us to Titus 3:5, said MILLENNIAL DAWN doctrine is true, and that his wealth had hindered him from gaining the prize of the high calling. I, said Eastman, was not thought a very good Christian, though a member of the church.

"The next day I tried the wheel or *Psychograph* again, and was told that a dear good friend of mine who had lived in speaking distance of me for several years was talking to me. She asked me to write to her husband and tell him, that she said, a certain boy (giving name) was having a bad influence over their boy. She told me that my husband (who is in Florida) was hurt and was very lame, and I got a letter from him day before yesterday confirming it. She said she regretted that she had not given DAWN the attention that I had wished her to, that she had life on the angelic plane; she also told me of the 'mine.' I asked did she know the one claiming to be Eastman, and she said yes, that it was a deceiving spirit personating him, and that I would best not make use of the means through which I could receive such communications. One claiming to be Cephas cited me to the first chapter of Daniel. Another, claiming to be my father, said the same. All said the same about the gold 'mine,' and all professed to believe in Christ and that DAWN is a correct exponent of God's Word, and told me that I was failing to make the best use of one of my 'gifts'—teaching; that I should teach publicly as well as individuals, but was cautioned with 1 Cor. 3:7 and Eph. 4:2.

"During the little time I experimented with the instrument I was told many things (a few of which were not true) that would take too much of your time to tell you; and several of the spirits claimed that they would heal the sick through me, if I would only trust them. A great deal of Scripture was given, and all very appropriate to those for whom it was given; but the Devil quoted Scripture to Christ; and I still think the same as I did before 'trying the spirits,'—only I was not sure that fallen angels would admit, even for

the purpose of deceiving, that Christ had 'come in the flesh;' but it seems now they will. Probably 1 John 4:1-3 refers to doctrines of men wholly. Of course, it would be possible for those who shall have 'part in the first resurrection' to speak through such a device, but is it probable that they will? I will be glad to hear from you on this subject.

[That passage has reference to men,—doctrines among men. It may be remarked here that the evil spirits not only have knowledge of present events, but, by some power can frequently closely approximate the future. In one instance under our notice two deaths within a year were foretold: one of the parties died, the other became seriously ill, but recovered. Some power is in Satan's hand, but with limitations. Compare Heb. 2:14; Psa. 97:10; 116:15 and Job. 2:3-6.—EDITOR.]

"What experience I have had tends to confirm your teaching—that the communications are from the fallen angels. They are very unreliable. One can but feel how impossible it will be in these closing days of the Gospel age for any one to 'stand' who has not a firm foundation for faith."

Here is an illustration of the insidious methods of these demons. Like Satan and the evil spirits of our Lord's day, they will confess Christ and the truth. Similarly, the woman "possessed" followed Paul and Silas several days saying truly (Acts 16:16-18), "These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation." But for that matter, abundant evidence could be adduced that they would confirm and approve almost any doctrine or theory held precious by the inquirer in order to gain his confidence, and thus a fuller power over him.

Respecting the "mine,"—that is a bait to draw and hold the interest. It is questionable whether the fallen angels can see deeper into the earth than can mankind. Of course, it might *happen* that the gold in paying quantities might be found on any of the gold-bearing veins of Georgia, but the experiences of miners in general and of drillers for petroleum who have been "directed by spirits," or who have used "divining rods," has been that, in the end, they lost money by following such directions. The presumption must therefore be that, if the "lying spirits" are not deceiving by misrepresenting themselves as possessing knowledge when they have none, then the same malevolence which leads them as "seducing spirits" to lure mankind to moral and mental wreck, leads them to take pleasure in misleading them to financial wreck. Lying spirits, like lying men, are not to be *believed* or trusted under any circumstances.

Concerning the advice to "teach": coming from such a quarter, it should rather incline us to fear that the demons saw in the sister a weakness in that direction from which she would be most easily assailable. It is safe to conclude in advance that their advice is either directly or indirectly intended to do us harm. And notice the cunning which sought to guard against suspicion by quoting texts cautioning to *humility!*

True, the people need instruction, and all instructors are "teachers;" but it is very unsafe for anyone to think of himself or herself as a teacher. The preferable plan, by far, is for each to be a pupil in the school of Christ the great Teacher; and to be ready to learn of him through any channel, or to be used by him in helping to make plain to others *his* teachings. Each one who learns anything of the Lord should tell it to others, not as his own wisdom and teaching, but the Lord's, and himself merely the channel which gladly passes the water of life on to others. No wonder the holy Spirit cautions us, "Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we [teachers] shall have the greater judgment [or severer trial]."—James 3:1.

With the thought of teaching others is closely associated the thought of superior wisdom; and from the first this has been Satan's bait. To mother Eve his promise as the reward of disobedience was, "Ye shall be [wise] as gods." And the temptation to her was that she perceived from his arguments that the forbidden fruit was desirable "*to make one wise.*" Alas, the wisdom which Satan gives is very undesirable. It is "[1] earthly, [2] sensual, [3] devilish;" as many, too late, have discovered. But on the contrary, "the wisdom which cometh down from above is first pure, then [2] peaceable, [3] gentle, [4] easy to be entreated, [5] full of mercy and good fruits, [6] without partiality and without hypocrisy." (Jas. 3:15-17) No wonder the inspired Apostle said, "I fear lest by any means as the serpent beguiled Eve, by subtilty [cunning], so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity [*purity*] that is in Christ." (2 Cor. 11:3) Let us therefore lose no opportunity for telling the "good tidings of great joy;" —but let us lose sight of ourselves as *teachers* and point all, as brethren and fellow-pilgrims, to the words and example of the great Teacher and of the twelve inspired apostles whom he appointed as our instructors, our teachers.

We advised the sister further, that it was *very* unwise to disobey the divine instructions (Isa. 8:19, 20) by having *anything whatever to do* with these "seducing spirits." These are not the spirits which we are to "try" "whether they be of God," for God has already forewarned us that they are *not of him*, but that they are "wicked spirits." As well might we use the Apostle's words as an excuse for trying all the various brands of intoxicating spirits to see if one could be found which would not make drunk. These "familiar," wicked spirits claim that they are numerous, a "legion" possessing one man: they would ask no more than that humanity should "*try*" them all. A fair trial or "test" is just what they request and they succeed sooner or later in enslaving most of those who test them.

In the passage which says, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they be of God" (1 John 4:1-6), the word spirits is used in the sense of teaching or doctrine and has no reference to spirit beings. This is shown by the verses following, which declare that we are to "try" or discern between "the spirit of *truth* and the spirit of *error*." And this may be quickly done, for all false doctrines either directly or indirectly deny that "Christ died *for our sins;*" that "the man Christ Jesus *gave himself a ransom* for all."

Assuredly we should not expect that the Lord, nor any in harmony with him, will ever make use of methods which the "lying spirits" use and which God in his Word has condemned and forbidden. To do so would expose God's people to all the "wiles of the devil."

The sister sent us an advertisement of the *Psychograph* which says,—

"Do you wish to investigate Spiritualism? Do you wish to develop mediumship? Do you desire to receive communications? The psychograph is an invaluable assistant. Many, who were not aware of their mediumistic gift, have, after a few sittings, been able to receive delightful messages. Many, who began with it as an amusing toy, found that the intelligence controlling it knew more than themselves, and became converts to Spiritualism."

Thus does Satan now make use of the belief common to all denominations of Christians as well as heathendom, that the dead are not dead but are angels hovering round us; and what is more calculated to "seduce" them than just such a toy?

By the same mail came the samples of *The Progressive Thinker*,—a spiritualist organ of the most pronounced type. We examined it, having in view matter for this article, and to our surprise found that several of its leading articles freely conceded that the vast majority of the communicating spirits are *evil spirits* which seek influence over human beings in order to work their ruin: and if possible to get possession of them to make them crazy. It told of written communications dropped into a room signed "Beelzebub" and "Devil." In one column under the caption "A Critical Study of Obsession," was an account of a poor woman who had been so beset by evil spirits that she was sent to an Insane Asylum and who finally got rid of their torments; and it gives her statement, "I prayed them away." Asked, "To whom did you pray?" her recorded answer is, "To the Ever-living God. He only can answer prayer." And yet in another column God's name is blasphemed, under the caption, "Peter and Paul," from which we quote these words—"Moses, who though said to be learned in all the Egyptian skill, was the very meanest of men, and for his God erroneously took Jehovah, a departed spirit of an Egyptian disappointed aspirant to some lucrative or ecclesiastical office."

In the same issue (April 3, '97), under the heading—"Thoughts Illustrating the Status of Spiritualism, and the Dangers that Beset the Honest Investigator," by Charles Dawbran, we have a notice of a book by an English clergyman, entitled "The Great Secret or the Modern Mystery of Spiritualism." Introducing the author the article says:—

"His experiences commenced with the deevlopment of his wife as a writing medium, through whom, from time to time, he received such tests as delight the heart of the worshiper of phenomena. He also seems to have made the acquaintance of almost every public medium who has at any time been high priest or priestess of the occult, to the worthy citizens of London. And he has apparently been a welcomed visitor to the homes and seances of every distinguished investigator or full-fledged believer in that city during the forty years of which he writes. He has included hypnotism in his investigations, and has been successful both as operator and subject. He has even dabbled a little in 'Black Magic,' at least sufficient to prove it a dread reality. So we have in this author a man most unusually qualified to deal intelligently with the subject.

That he is now, and has for almost all these years been a believer is evident, for he narrates incidents and proofs which would carry conviction to every intelligent and unprejudiced mind. But his trouble has been that of every experienced investigator. He has not only witnessed much phenomena that could be explained as due to the normal or abnormal powers of the mortal, but where there has been an evident 'ghost' at work, mistakes and at times *evident fraud*, have troubled his ecclesiastical soul.

"So we have little but the usual mixed experiences of the average intelligent investigator. *A grain of wheat to a bushel of chaff* is claimed by the spiritualist as abundant compensation for the toil and trouble of long years of waiting upon the 'dear spirits.' And to some minds perhaps it is. But to others there have ever been fierce attempts to increase the crop of truth. And it is herein that the experiencs of this clergyman become interesting to every truth-lover the world over. He, as we have said, has had abundant experience in both public and private seances, but his pathway to progress seemed blocked. *He was just as liable to the usual imperfections of spirit intercourse after many years of such investigation, as in the very first sittings with his own wife and a few chosen friends.*

"So the question became: 'Is progress possible?' And to solve this he tried an experiment which inspires the present writer to call this attention to his book. For as we have seen, the rest was what almost everybody can endorse, and say 'me too.' He determined to seek spirit intercourse from the highest plane possible to the mortal, so that if there be truth to the maxim 'like to like' he might attract the very highest, and repel those who come from the unseen to trouble and perplex weary mortals. He devoted a house to that purpose. Not merely were there rooms for use by mediums and circles of investigators or believers, but a chapel was prepared where he himself conducted a religious service twice a week, and it was at the conclusion of this service that a special seance was held by the believers present. The surroundings were most solemn. Frivolity was conspicuous only by its absence. The spirits had promised great results. For over a year at one time, and for months at others, these meetings were continued. But no promise was fulfilled. Prayers to God for light and truth proved no more efficacious than the eternal 'Nearer my God to thee' of the usual public seance, with its miscellaneous crowd.

"So our poor clergyman has his one grain of wheat after forty years of honest attempt to make at least a pint of it. He clings to that atom of truth with his soul, but his earnest attempt at progress has proved a life-long failure, although, apparently, every condition was favorable to success. Since such is the experience of the thousands, once zealous, who have become 'silent' believers from the same cause, we may well ask: Is modern Spiritualism fixed and bounded like the theological systems of the past and present? Is there no hope of solving its problems, overcoming its barriers, and reaching a higher manhood on this side of the life line? Is the honest and convinced investigator presently to become discouraged, almost as a matter of course?"

The claim made by spiritists is that *good* spirits commune with good people, and evil spirits with evil people is thus disproved. Could stronger testimony than this be produced in evidence that *all spirit communications* are from evil spirits and are wholly unreliable? The writer, further on in the same Spiritist journal, gives the following account of the experiences of another "believer," for which he vouches:—

"For a score of years he had been true to his convictions, endeavoring to reduce all belief to a basis of provable facts. His own sensitiveness permitted spirit approach, and sometimes the heavens had seemed to open to shower blessings on his soul. But foes came as readily as friends whenever the gate was ajar, so that, for the most part, safety compelled him to avoid personal experience of spirit return. The active mind offers poor foothold to any spirit, so he accepted public office and labored zealously for the public weal. But at intervals the experiences reappeared, and it seemed as if the battle had to be fought all over again. He failed to find a direct cause which might account for the presence of his foes. But they seemed to have certain gathering points. For instance, he could rarely visit a public library to select a book but that he would be followed and annoyed for hours by some "invisible," seeking to control him. It is true, each battle, when fought to victory, was usually followed by a brief and happy re-union with angel friends, but the sense of danger made him only the more earnest to close the door to all spirit return. His method of fighting off the influence was to resolutely fix his mind on some matter of interest in his daily affairs. And this would, sooner or later, prove successful every time. Any attempt to gain help from the spirit side of life only seemed to give added power to the foe."

This man had evidently progressed in Spiritism so that he had become a "clairaudient medium." The supposed good spirits or "angel friends" which sometimes visited him were merely the same evil spirits called by the writer "foes;" but they transformed themselves to his mind by assuming an opposite attitude when they found him getting away from their influence;—to keep him from abandoning them altogether, and in hope that by and by they would get such an influence over him that escape would be impossible.

From the same journal, under the heading, "Incidents With Good Advice," after giving two cases of pronounced insanity, the direct result of "spirit control," we find the following:

"The lesson I would draw is this: Never sit alone, if there is the least probability of the controls overcoming one's judgment. Even though their intentions may be good, as in Mr. B.'s case; yet their experience has been insufficient with regard to the management of mediums, and their operations may become very injudicious. Never permit a control to cause you to do that which your judgment cannot sanction, no matter under what promise it is given. Only evil designing controls are liable to resort to such measures.

"These cases call to mind the thought that undoubtedly there are many others in the asylums, who are simply the victims of control. I could cite another case, where during her first confinement, a young woman was given chloroform and other treatment which weakened her system to such an extent that a degraded spirit took hold of her organism, and the language he made that previously moral girl use, was deplorable. Under these conditions she was committed to the asylum, where she is at present and at last reports was, at times, able to control her body, and, of course, at those times she was considered 'rational' by the authorities.

"Let all Spiritualists be sure to caution persons who are beginning their investigation by sitting alone to be very careful—and to make a regular practice of reporting, so that those of experience may know what is taking place and advise accordingly. And further, let us make a practice of looking into all cases of so-called 'insanity' before they are sent to the asylums; perchance it may be a case like those I have cited."

A "strong delusion," an "energy of Satan" truly Spiritism is, when people with all these evidences before them still return to it time and again, even after being injured,—as do the once singed summer moths to the deadly glare that fascinates them. There is a dense darkness in the world today upon divine truth; and thinking people, when awakened from the stupor which has so long benumbed their reasoning faculties, as respects religion, cry out for 'Light, more Light;" and if they do not get the true Light of the knowledge of God (which shines only for the honest and consecrated believer in the ransom), they are *ready* for the false lights with which "the god of this world," Satan, seeks to ensnare all—Higher Criticism, otherwise called Agnosticism, or Spiritism, or Christian Science, or Theosophy. These, if it were possible, would deceive the very elect; and are well represented as being Satan's ministers transformed as angels of light.

PAUL A PRISONER AT PHILIPPI

——JULY 11.—ACTS 16:22-34.——

"Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.—Acts 16:11.

Although, as we have seen, Paul and his company were divinely directed into Europe, his early experiences there would have led many others to think that there was some mistake respecting the matter,—some misdirection; for he had not been long in the new field of labor until he was imprisoned. The Apostle, however, knew to expect just such experiences, and realized himself in the hands of one who was both able and willing to make all things work together for good to his servants. The imprisonment was of the evil one and his deluded servants, and was permitted of God as a means for contrasting the spirit of the truth with the spirit of error, and of bringing the Gospel particularly to the attention of the jailor.

The circumstances which led to the imprisonment are interesting and instructive. Satan then, as previously and since, used spirit manifestations to delude the people. A young woman was the spirit medium through which the demons (fallen angels) operated, personating the dead, and

delivering messages purporting to be from them, to those who paid liberally for the service. Apparently, the revenues from this source were very large, for the woman was owned and controlled by a company or syndicate, and "brought her masters much gain."

It is perhaps difficult for us to determine the motives which prompted the evil spirits to move the medium to cry after Paul and Silas, "These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation." These evil spirits, however, were similarly moved on several occasions to confess our Lord Jesus Christ. (Mark 1:24, 34) The Apostle endured this testimony for several days, but finally expelled the evil spirits; probably through sympathy for the woman, as well as from a realization that if thus permitted the evil spirits might claim some collusion as between themselves and the Apostle, and so after his departure might have an improper influence upon those who would receive the Gospel of Christ.

Wealth always has been a power. It is not surprising, therefore, that the syndicate of worldly men who were making much gain through this spirit medium, angered by the wanton destruction of the value of their property, as they would regard the matter, and realizing the loss of all their future profits from this source, would feel disposed to inflict some kind of retribution upon those who had been the cause of their misfortune. And their wealth had power with the magistrate who, similarly blinded, did not recognize that a good work had been done in liberating a fellow-creature from the power of the devil, and thus stopping one avenue of evil influence and deception. The Apostle, as a shrewd man, probably knew to expect some such results; otherwise we may suppose that he would have rebuked the evil spirit on the first day. He probably took the time to think and pray over the matter, and to ascertain the Lord's will before putting himself and the interests of the cause in jeopardy. We may be sure that he was guided in this matter for good, the Lord probably wishing to bring the gospel message to the jailor.

The charges brought against Paul and Silas are worthy of note as indicating the cunning of the syndicate owning the medium. When Paul and Silas were dragged to the public square, where trials were conducted, the charge brought against them was not that they had wrecked the financial interests of the syndicate by the exercise of a spirit more powerful than that which possessed their medium, for such a charge would have had no weight under the laws of the Romans; but taking advantage of the fact that the Roman law, while tolerant of all religions, made it a criminal offense to attempt to proselyte a Roman, they made their charges along this line, claiming that Paul and Silas were Jews, who were endeavoring to proselyte Romans. This charge had some foundation in fact, for of course the brethren were there for the very purpose of converting Jews, Greeks and Romans to Christ. On this charge they were adjudged guilty, and the masses taking sides against them, the magistrates made the penalties the more severe. They were beaten in public, and then put into the inner prison and their feet made fast in the stocks.

With many, such treatment, and the fact that God permitted it, would have brought discouragement, and they would consequently have chosen some less hazardous calling in life; but these servants of God were true soldiers of the cross, who had enlisted for life, realizing that they were called upon "to endure hardness as good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ." Instead of bemoaning their lot and wishing they had never enlisted in the Lord's service, or thinking of how they could withdraw from it, these noble men, on the contrary, rejoiced and thanked God that they were accounted worthy to suffer in his name and for his cause. While not disposed to be obtrusive with their prayers and praises, they evidently felt that it would be proper that their fellow prisoners who would know something of their treatment, should know something also of how they received it, and of the grace of God which sustained them. No such prisoners had ever been there before, and never before had that prison been a Bethel, a house of God, a gate of heaven. As the Apostles prayed their strength of heart and fervency of spirit increased until they broke forth in songs of thankfulness, gratitude and praise to the King of kings and Lord of lords.

Heathen religions have holy books, and prayers, and occasional mournful chants by their priests or priestesses, but they have no singing of hymns in worship. These seem to have been confined first, to the Jews, and secondly, to their successors in grace, Christians; but now, alas! they are taken up by all classes, and some times prostituted to the uses of Mormonism, Christian Science, Spiritism, Theosophy, etc.

How greatly this conduct of Paul and Silas differs from the recorded conduct and sentiments of some of the greatest and most notable and most stoical on the pages of history. Of Ovid, the famed poet and philosopher, it is declared—"There is scarcely one of his many letters which he wrote during his short exile, which is not full of unmanly lamentations." Of Seneca, a noted writer of Paul's day, it is written that his books were "full of most sounding professions of stoic superiority to passion and pain, yet, when exiled, he broke into abject complaint." Similar things are said concerning Cicero, and Napoleon Bonaparte is another example. Yet all these men, even in their exile, were surrounded by wealth and luxury: but here we have before us two men who had forsaken all for the privilege of being God's ambassadors, representatives of Christ, suffering to bear the message of divine grace to the sin-blinded and unthankful;—yet under most distressing circumstances, with their backs lacerated from the beating, with their feet in the stocks, and their whole bodies therefore pained and uncomfortable, with seemingly no cause for thankfulness that the worldly could discern, they were filled with love and gratitude to God, and their hearts overflowed in songs of praise. Surely they were actuated by super-human hopes and joys!

Nor were they the only ones upon whom the truth and the holy spirit of the truth has had such an influence. We remember many martyrs who likewise "endured as seeing him who is invisible." We think of Daniel praying in the lion's den and answering the king in a cheerful voice, "The God whom I serve hath sent his angel and shut the lion's mouth." We remember the three Hebrew captives, who, because of faithfulness to God, were cast into the fiery furnace; and who there had the presence with them of one in appearance like the Son of Man. We remember Bunyan, who, while in Bedford jail, England, for faithfulness to the truth, not only prayed to God, but figuratively sang his praises, as represented in his remarkable work—*Pilgrim's Progress*. We remember also King David of old, some of whose most expressive and impressive Psalms were written in hours of distress, when the Lord upheld him. Madam Guyon, while imprisoned in the Castle Vincennes (1695), wrote songs and sang them in praise to God. Writing of it subsequently she said, "It sometimes seems to me as if I were a little bird, whom the Lord had placed in a cage, and that I had nothing now to do but sing. The joy of my heart gave brightness to the objects around me. The stones of my prison looked to my eyes like rubies." In prison she wrote:—

"A little bird I am, shut from the fields of air;
And in my songs I sit and sing to him who placed me there:
Well pleased a prisoner thus to be, because, my God, it
pleaseth thee.
My cage confines me round,—abroad I cannot flee;
But though my wing is closely bound, my heart's at liberty.
My prison walls cannot control the flight, the freedom of
my soul."

Thank God, the days of beating and imprisonment for Christ's sake are no more; but there are still opportunities for the development and exercise of the spirit of sacrifice by all who are faithful followers in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus; there are social smitings and ostracisms for the truth's sake, which can be borne with rejoicing to such an extent that the smart is scarcely felt. There are times when the Lord permits our financial conditions to become almost a gloomy prison as viewed from the natural standpoint,—times when responsibilities or sicknesses may shut us in as prisoners; but under such circumstances the faithful are able to realize the Lord's favor and mercy; they find many blessings to recount and their hearts overflow with thankful gratitude and praise, so that all who come in contact with them take knowledge of them, as they did of the Apostles, "that they have been with Jesus and learned of him."

The Lord's response to the faith, prayers and praise of his servants, by an earthquake, is of course out of the ordinary course of his providences; but the case was an extraordinary one. These were extraordinary servants, the work given them to do in establishing the church was an extraordinary work. And evidently something extraordinary was needed in the case of the jailor, who, though an honest and well disposed man, was not expecting any blessing of religious instruction from the prisoner under his care: yet, as soon as he grasped the situation he became as teachable as a child at the feet of his prisoners, inquiring the way to eternal life. It is worthy of note that the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ has little effect upon any who receive it otherwise than in meekness: those who oppose themselves and fight the truth at every step are not of the kind, nor in the condition to be blessed by it: hence the Lord tells us to "preach the Gospel to the *meek*."

The gist of the apostle's instructions is summed up in our golden text,—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ"—the sig-

nificance of which is very comprehensive. It implies not only mental assent to the fact that Christ died for *our sins* and arose for *our justification*, but also a reception of these truths into the heart and into the life of the believer; so that from thenceforth he may realize that he is not his own, but bought with a price, even the precious blood of Christ; that he belongs to him and should willingly submit in every matter to his guidance and direction.

The Apostle did not tell the jailor and his family that they must *seek* the Lord's favor and forgiveness for several weeks, in prayer at a mourner's bench, or otherwise; but, on the contrary, that they should simply and at once *believe the facts* as preached to them, and at once start a consecrated life in harmony therewith. And all this faith and consecration was at once confessed and professed by the jailor and his family when they were immersed.

Meantime, we can imagine with what tenderness and gratitude to God the jailor washed the wounds of his remarkable prisoners; and recognizing them as the servants and representatives of the Lord he entertained them with the best his house afforded. A proper appreciation of God and his goodness always leads to an appreciation of the servants and instruments which God is pleased to use in bringing blessings to us.

THE GOSPEL TO THE NOBLE AND TO THE MORE NOBLE

JULY 18.—ACTS 17:1-12.

"They received the Word with all readiness of mind and searched the Scriptures daily."—Acts 17:11.

Leaving Philippi at the request of the magistrates, and for the sake of peace, not insisting upon his rights as a Roman citizen, Paul with Silas and Timothy proceeded westward, leaving Luke with the believers at Philippi for the further establishment of the believers in the truth. Their next stop was at the city of Thessalonica, the capital of Macedonia. They were seeking cities where there were considerable numbers of Jews, knowing that they would be the best prepared to understand the gospel and to accept it. One of the attractions at Thessalonica was a large synagogue: and it was to the Jews, as usual, that the Apostle first addressed himself.

It is worthy of note that the Apostle's manner was not that of a "ranter," but of a logical and connected reasoner: his proofs were brought from the Old Testament Scriptures; and the correspondence between these testimonies concerning Messiah, given of God through the prophets, with the facts and circumstances of our Lord's ministry and death were logically set forth. And no doubt all his hearers had some knowledge of the matters which had transpired in Jerusalem; for representatives undoubtedly went every year to Jerusalem, to the Passover. The reports which reached them had no doubt all been from the prejudiced Jewish side of the matter, leading them to believe that, while Jesus was a good man who performed many wonderful works, he was nevertheless an impostor, possessed of a devil, a false Messiah, etc. The Apostle's work, then, was largely to correct these misapprehensions, and to show that the very things which they had heard respecting the ignominious death of Jesus were all parts of the divine plan, that fitted perfectly to the previous testimony of the prophets. He proved to them that Messiah must of necessity have died as the Redeemer, before he could justly dispense divine mercy and forgiveness to any. And then, he showed that all these things had been accurately and properly fulfilled in the experiences of Jesus.

As usual, wherever the true Gospel went, the result was *a division;* and the same is true today.

So our Lord foretold, saying, "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword." The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God, and it not only separates in congregations, but also in homes—the Ishmael class opposes the Isaac class—the Esau class opposes the Jacob class. Many not appreciating the divine plan are surprised that the truth causes division. Such divisions along right lines are to be expected and esteemed: but the Apostle speaks of another kind of divisions which are disapproved and are to be avoided; namely, divisions on technicalities, methods, forms, genealogies, etc. The Apostle assures us that such divisions are of the adversary. But divisions as between those who accept Christ as their Redeemer and the only hope of salvation, and those who do not so accept him, are most important and to be desired. Upon all other points the Lord's people are to be peace-lovers and "peace makers." "So far as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Waive all unimportant tests and shibboleths, but in no sense or degree either ignore or deny the only basis of Christian fellowship—the "ransom for all."

The believing Jews consorted or associated with the brethren, and quite a good many Greeks, including a number of honorable women, were counted among the believers; and the cause seemed to be gaining a good foothold: but again God permitted a disturbance which brought the truth and its servants more prominently before the attention of the whole people and served to make the cleavage between the believers and the unbelievers the more distinct. Thus not only a trial of faith and of character was brought unto the believers, but a blessing came, also, to those who were faithful; for all who took a decided stand for the truth were undoubtedly helped and strengthened thereby. The spirit of compromise with error is the most subtle and dangerous spirit encountered by those who are called to forsake all and follow Christ.

The unbelieving Jews were those who were not in proper condition of heart to receive the truth;—of the Ishmael class, they were full of envy and jealousy against the true seed of Abraham—the true heirs of the promise. They did not hesitate to employ hoodlums as their servants in creating an uproar and making a mob-assault upon the house in which they supposed Paul and Silas and Timothy were lodged. Not finding these, they took Jason and others of the new converts before their tribunal, accusing them of consorting with the disturbers of the peace. As usual, sagacity was shown in the nature of the charges; the same charge was brought forward that was brought against our Lord himself, namely, treason to Cæsar—teaching of another king. Under autocratic governments, such as that of the Cæsars, rulers everywhere were expected to be specially severe against any and every form of treason, and to have ignored such charges would have made them appear to be co-conspirators against Cæsar. How shrewdly the adversary makes his attacks!

Since the Lord had been pleased to frustrate the plans of the enemies of the truth for the arrest of his ministers, the latter concluded that it would be the proper thing not to arouse further antagonism, nor to challenge their enemies by bringing charges of riot, etc., but rather peaceably departed for another city. In this they followed the instructions of our Lord, "When they shall persecute you in one city flee unto another." They followed the example of our Lord also, of whom we read that he left Judea and Galilee, for he "could not walk in Judea because the Jews sought to kill him."

The words of the enemies—"These that have turned the world up-side-down are come hither also," indicate how widespread was the knowledge of the truth at this time, and how zealous the efforts of the apostles were conceded by their enemies to be. Nor was this turning up-side-down wholly the work of the apostles: rather it was the work of the spirit of the truth, wherever the truth was preached; the apostles were merely zealous in introducing the *truth* which did the work. When they were gone, the true believers, inspired by the same spirit, continued the work of turning matters up-side-down, not only in the synagogue, but also, we may be sure, in their own hearts and in their own lives; turning out the evil and impure, and turning in more and more of the fruits and graces of the spirit of the truth. The reason that so many who receive some knowledge of the truth, know little of the turning up-side-down of the perversities of their old natures is, because they fail to receive the *spirit of the truth*, fail to come into full sympathy of heart with the principles of divine righteousness which inspired the word of truth and formulated the divine plan. Alas! many seem to receive the truth not in the *love of it;* but rather in the love of controversy or in curiosity. To such it will be of no real value. To profit us it must be received as the sword of the Spirit to kill the old nature, that the new nature may develop;—it must become "a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" to us, that we may by divine grace conquer self and bring every thought into captivity to the will of God.

The next stop was at Berea, sixty miles west of Thessalonica. Of the people of this city wonderful words of commendation are written, "These were more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the Word in all readiness of mind, examining the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." This commendation is frequently misunderstood as applicable to the Christians at Berea; but not so, it applies specially to the Jews at that place: they seemed to be just ready for the truth, and yet received it, not in a spirit of credulity, simply because it was told to them, but properly

they were ready and of a proper spirit to investigate, and to see whether the things spoken fitted to the prophetic statements respecting Messiah and his work, etc. This is always a mark of true nobility, and such noble persons are worthy of the truth and are enabled to receive it. Nevertheless, we are to remember that readiness to investigate and to receive the truth are not the only qualities which go to make up a Christian. In one of his parables our Lord illustrates a class which was *ready to receive the Word*, but had no root in themselves, and who consequently, when the sun of persecution arose, withered and lost their Christian vitality.

Apparently, the larger proportion of the Jews at Berea became believers, and the unbelievers were so comparatively few that they did not attempt persecution. But whether it was from lack of persecution, or whether it was that the seed at Berea fell into hearts that had less depth, it is nevertheless a fact that the church at Thessalonica seems to have flourished far better than the church established at Berea. This is evidenced by the fact that the Apostle wrote two of his epistles to the church at Thessalonica, and we have no record of any written to the church at Berea. We may draw a lesson from this to the effect that it is not always the places in which the truth is most favorably received that it will hold out the longest and bring forth most fruitage. Persecution and opposition are often agencies of great blessings; —in part perhaps because they draw the line of demarkation sharply between those who are the Lord's and those who are not the Lord's. A certain amount of persecution is very helpful in the establishment of character. Hence the encouragement of the Apostle to "rejoice in tribulation," and again his declaration, "Tribulation worketh patience." Again the Apostle Peter stated that present afflictions may be considered light, because we recognize that "they work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

CUMBERED WITH MUCH SERVING

"So busy, O so busy," is the cry on every side,
"There's much to do, and workers few, while on the moments glide;"
And weary hearts are fainting oft' beneath their load of care;
And willing hands have grown too weak the burden's weight to bear.

"No time to rest, no time to wait for strength to be renewed,
No time to tarry till the soul with power is endued;
The tasks increasing every day, this life so near its close;
We cannot rest." the toilers cry, "until death brings repose!"

O burdened hearts, can it be true this is the Master's will?
Are you to labor every hour and never to be still?
These vessels are so very small, our cups will not run o'er
Unless we seek the fountain's brink for filling more and more.

Take time to sit at Jesus' feet and hear his blessed Word;
Wait there, like Mary, till your soul to love's best deed is stirred;
Then break the alabaster box, and let its perfume sweet
Spread with the Gospel's joyful sound, and make the earth replete!

O be not cumbered with much care,—they serve who only wait;
The Lord's command, "Go thou and work," will never come too late.
His truth must burn within your soul e'er you a task begin:
For we must know our captain's will if faith's good fight we win.

Then come apart each weary one into a place of rest,—
The flesh so weak must often seek the Rock and Shadow blest;
There tarry in that silence sweet till freed from every care,
And you arise, with strength renewed, for him to do and dare.

—*F. G. Burroughs.*

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

The "American Railway Union" under the lead of Eugene V. Debs, at its June convention, merged itself into a new organization, known as "The Social Democracy of America." The scheme proposed is that members and friends of the Society shall contribute funds to start a system of colonies, one after another, as rapidly as possible, in some state of the Union at present sparsely settled and otherwise considered favorable to the scheme. When the colonists are of sufficient number they hope to control the state legislature and government—to enact socialistic laws, and to enforce them; and thus to give to the world a practical example of their claim, that Socialism is to be the world's saviour.

Practical tests of the various social remedies proposed are just what is needed to prove them all at best palliatives, never remedies, and often breeders of woes worse than those they seek to cure. It would be an excellent plan to set apart one-half say, of Oregon, and divide it into about twenty little states for experimental purposes, in which the advocates of various "social-redemption" theories could rule themselves and "try" their theories, and prove them failures. Give one to "The Social Democracy," another to the "Nationalists," another to the "Single Taxers," another to "The New Woman," another to "Anarchists," etc. In fact there is no need for legislation on the subject, for there is plenty of good vacant land to be had by settlers, free, in several states.

But what these "reformers" want is not free land, free water, free air, and plenty of hard work in "subduing the forests," etc. The Pilgrim fathers got those things with "sweat of face;" and it developed in them strong characters for integrity, and a reverence for the Creator and his Word.

Judging from their declaration of intentions, "The Social Democracy of America" purposes to *steal* a state. Under cover of liberal laws they design to enter some favored state and to so change its laws that the invested wealth, improvements and conveniences accumulated by others through years of toil shall, *nolens volens*, be largely appropriated to the use and convenience of the less prudent or less fortunate invaders.

And all this is proposed on the plea that the "reformers" wish to demonstrate the blessings that would flow from the operation of the *Law of Love*, as opposed to the miseries of the present *Law of Selfishness*. Alas! how easily men can deceive themselves. Surely, anyone can see that at very most this is the *self-love* of one class fighting the *self-love* of another class.

We rejoice to note any evidence of the growth of the spirit of generosity in mankind; and would be glad if all men were willing to surrender private interests to the public welfare; but we are not so blind to facts and reason as to suppose that Mr. Debs and his associates are acting the part of philanthropists in scheming to acquire the property of others: though, of course, it may be claimed that such a readjustment should come sometime.

But all such schemes are now in order, and many of them will undoubtedly be tried that the world may have *demonstrations* of that which God's people already know from his Word; —that all human schemes must fail to bring forth perfect results because conceived and carried forward by men and women whose thoughts and deeds are warped by the sin and selfishness of six thousand years' development.

Mr. Debs and his principal associates express great confidence in the success of their scheme, and point to the success of the Mormons in Utah. They forget that the secret of the Mormon success is a religious unit that practically enslaves the people to the control of their Elders whom they accept as divinely appointed and inspired. No other slavery can hold its victims so firmly as religious slavery—good or bad. And Mr. Debs could expect no such influence over those who would follow him as standard-bearer. There would be nothing but *selfishness* common to all who would join his colonies: and selfishness is the very basis of anger, envy, hatred and strife, and constantly tends to disintegration. His scheme might prosper so long as *donations* in its aid would continue, or so long as special hopes of improvement at the expense of others held out; but it would go to pieces at once when these selfish *inducements* would cease.

Mr. Debs and some of his associates no doubt have some benevolent sentiments blended with their selfish ones, and with us would probably rejoice to see all the "groaning creation" (Rom. 8:22, 23) relieved from the present pressure of evil. What they lack is the knowledge which comes from the Lord's Word—a quarter from which they expect no light.

It teaches—(1) That no man can either appreciate or exercise pure love unmixed with selfishness, except he be

"born again," for which he must first be "begotten again" by the holy spirit of the Lord's Word of truth.

(2) That only such are *qualified* to rule either themselves or others, or to enjoy full liberty.

(3) That God has been testing and selecting just such a class of rulers during this gospel age; and that soon he will bless the world by establishing his "elect" under Christ, their "Head," as his autocratic kingdom, to take away human liberty and rule with a rod of iron, until all who will obey shall be blessed and lifted to perfection of being and of character; and all who will not obey shall be destroyed. (Acts 3:19-23; 1 Cor. 15:12-25) Then, at the close of the Millennial age, full liberty can be granted to all; for none but the worthy will remain.

"Our Father which art in heaven. . . . Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven."

WHAT SAY THE SCRIPTURES ABOUT SPIRITISM?

PROOFS THAT IT IS DEMONISM—Concluded

Another popular Spiritualist paper is *The Philosophical Journal*. It continually urges that its gospel of Spiritism be tested, and declares it to be the one thing the world needs; and yet it also admits the frauds practiced by the "spirits" upon mediums. It will admit that when detected as "evil spirits," "lying spirits," by misrepresentation, fraud, wicked suggestions or works, arousing the victim to resistance or relief through prayer, evidently the *same spirits* return as *moralists*, with reproofs, professions of sympathy and promises of aid in resisting the evil spirits, etc., only to improve the first opportunity of weakness or temptation to break down all resistance of the will and obtain complete possession—obsession. We clip a statement in support of this from its issue of April 22, '97, signed by A. N. Waterman, one of the leading Spiritualist lights. Under the caption, "Real Authorship of Spirit Communications," he says:—

"It appears to me impossible that in this life we can know from whom a spiritual communication from the other world is made. We can have evidence, something like that which we possess in reference to the authorship of a telegram, but no more."

Would people of "sound mind" stake their *all*, risk an insanity which according to their own accounts is manifold worse in torture than ordinary dementia, and spend their lives trying to get other people to risk their alls similarly, when for it all they have no more *evidence* than goes with a telegram? Would they do so when the bitter experiences of forty years testing had told them that the genuine are at most only as "*one grain to a bushel*," as one of them has just told us?

No, no; only desperately deluded people would pursue such a course. Evidently as the holy Spirit in men produces "the spirit of a *sound* mind" (2 Tim. 1:7; Prov. 2:6, 7), so, on the other hand, the spirit of devils produces the spirit of an *unsound* mind.

Another letter received recently from Florida, from a brother in Christ, a WATCH TOWER reader, well educated in several languages, informs us concerning some peculiar experiences recently had with these "seducing spirits." He became *aware of the presence* of invisible spirit beings, and they seemed to manifest a curious interest in his work: he was translating MILLENNIAL DAWN into a foreign language.

Well informed along the Scriptural lines presented foregoing, as to who these "seducing spirits" are, he nevertheless forgot, or failed to heed the divine instruction,—that mankind should hold *no communication whatever* with these "lying spirits" and "have *no fellowship* with the unfruitful works of darkness." The *neglect* of this instruction caused him serious trouble; and but for the interposition of divine mercy, in response to his and our prayers, it might have made shipwreck of him—soul and body.

He was allured to the *conference* by a mixture of curiosity with a benevolent desire to do them good by preaching to them the glorious gospel of divine love and mercy operating through Christ toward all mankind; and the eventual hope of a judgment (probationary trial) for the fallen angels, declared in the Scriptures. (1 Cor. 6:3) At first they gave close attention and appeared to take a deep and reverent interest in the message; but before long they became very "familiar" spirits, intruding themselves and their questions and remarks at all times and places, disputing with him and with each other in a manner and upon topics far from edifying, so that he remonstrated: finally he demanded that they depart, but having gained his "inner ear" (having made of him what Spiritists would term a "*clairaudient* medium") they were not disposed to go, and only through earnest prayer was he finally delivered. He should have been on his guard against their seductive influences; he should have remembered that whatever message of grace the Lord may *yet* have for these fallen angels he has *not yet sent it to them*, and that none are authorized to speak for the Lord without authority. "How shall they preach except they be *sent?*" The message of salvation thus far is to mankind only; and even here it is limited, for although all are to be counseled to repent of sin and to reform, yet the gospel of salvation is restricted to *repentant "believers"* only,—"the meek of the earth."

WARNINGS FROM A SPIRITIST AND SWEDENBORGIAN

Joseph Hartman has published a book of 378 pages in which he recounts his experiences as a Spirit medium (led into it by Swedenborg's teachings), his debasement almost to the loss of reason by spirit obsession, and his final recovery from its ensnarement of his will; but strange to say, he is still a firm believer in Swedenborgianism and Spiritism, although, like others, he cautions every one to be on guard against their wicked devices. Poor deluded man, he still believes that there are good spirits.

Mr. H. had come in contact with the "Planchette," a wooden device which holds a pencil and moves readily under the hands of certain mediums or "sensitives," even children, writing answers to questions propounded to it; and he had attended several tipping and rapping seances, and was convinced that they were not frauds, but the operations of invisible, intelligent spirits. He became *actively* interested while endeavoring to convince *doubting friends* of the genuineness of the manifestations. Next he tried it in his own family and developed the fact that his little son was a drawing and writing medium. Next he was curious to investigate the phenomena of spirit *materialization*. About this time his daughter "Dolly" died, and he was deeply interested in the apparations or materializations which professed to be "Dolly." He, however, was incredulous, and, in his own words, "gave it up under a cloud, and a suspicion of fraud." But after five years of experience he says,—"Whatever doubts I may have entertained respecting the phenomena, I am clearly of the opinion that *honest materializations* are now of frequent occurrence. Who the forms are, or whence derived, is a mooted question." We have just seen that if the manifestations are "honest" so far as the mediumship is concerned, they are frauds so far as the persons represented are concerned—simulations of the dead, by the fallen angels.

Later the table-tipping and rapping and drawing and writing tests were revived at Mr. H.'s home, two of his children becoming adept mediums, and finally, he himself became a writing medium, to his own surprise and without expectation or solicitation. Now he could and did hold frequent converse supposedly with his daughter "Dolly," but really with demons who personated her, and others, and was caused to smell pleasant odors, etc. As a later development he became a speaking medium, and "under control" would speak and act without his own intention or volition; but with full power to refuse to be a medium to such "spirits" as he chose to refuse, because of their former rudeness or obscenity. Next he was granted the "inner ear," "Clair-audience," or ability to hear sounds not audible to others, and thus to hold converse with the "spirits" without any outward agency, such as writing, rapping, etc.

Of his "spirit friends" he says,—"They described to me that their controlling circle consisted of 'twelve spiritual gifts or virtues' which composed a 'band' of very great strength; and under their guidance, they declared, I would become one of the greatest mediums ever known. I revolted—had not the least ambition for fame of that sort.—They were the more determined."

Thus gradually was Mr. Hartman brought, against his wish, more and more under the "control" of the wicked spirits which finally obsessed him. The next experience was with a peculiar clairaudient "Voice" which represented itself to be the Lord and took full control of him, directing his every act. It pictured all his errors and weaknesses in darkest shades; and endeavored to destroy all hope. He was told to pray, and when he attempted to pray he was given such conflicting suggestions as to words as made it impossible. He was fast in the snare of the "wicked spirits;" "possessed," and controlled by "spirit-mesmerism," as he calls it.

But finally he escaped their bondage;—a once strong will reasserted itself, and he wrote the account to hinder others from being similarly entrapped. But he does not understand the matter, notwithstanding his remarkable experiences. His

experiences had proved that all the "spirits" which he had come in contact with were "wicked," lying, profane, and a majority of them vulgarly and disgustingly obscene: Yet, believing these to be the spirits of dead men and women, he surmised that he had met a band of evil ones only, and that there were other bands of good, truthful and pure spirits of good people. If he had but known the Lord's testimony on this subject, it would have put the entire matter in another light.

After gaining *will*-control of himself he was still attended by these evil spirits whose character he now fully knew; and they tried repeatedly to bring his will power again under "control," but had no power that he would not grant. He did, however, grant them liberty to use his hand in writing communications, and in reply to his questions respecting how and why they had abused his confidence, lied to him, were obscene and sought to bind and injure him, they answered that they were constitutionally and thoroughly bad and that they were "devils;"—again contradicting this and declaring that they were spirits of dead human beings. But to confirm him in Swedenborgianism they told him that there were no Swedenborgians among them. And Hartman evidently *believed* these self-confessed "lying spirits," for he concludes his book by quoting proofs that Swedenborg had passed through experiences of *obsession* somewhat like his own. He quotes from Swedenborg's Diary 2957-2996 as follows:—

"Very often when any one spoke with me, spirits spoke through me. . . . This occurred many times; for instance twice today. I cannot enumerate the times, they are so many. . . . Moreover, they have *laughed* through me, *and done many things.* . . . These are those who introduce these things into my thoughts, and while I am unconscious of it, *lead my hand to write thus.*"

Hartman says of Swedenborg further:—

"It is a matter of history that Swedenborg's maligners, not understanding *interior temptations* or *spirit control*, published that he was crazy, and that he did several foolish and insane things while living in London. . . . He was under control of spirits who acted through his body, speaking through him and moving his body as if it were their own. . . . During a part of this transitional period he was unquestionably controlled by evil spirits. He says he had 'tremors and was shaken from head to foot, and thrown out of bed on his face' . . . . 'I was in the temptation,' he says, thoughts invaded me that I could not control, ... and full liberty was given them. . . . While I had the most damnable thoughts, the worst that could possibly be, Jesus Christ was presented visibly before my internal sight.'"

Mr. Hartman comments:—"This we believe was an evil spirit pretending to be Christ, as in our own case the spirit pretended to be God."

To us it seems evident that Swedenborg was a spirit-medium and was an advance agent for promulgating and establishing the "doctrines of devils" respecting "seven heavens and seven hells," etc., etc., *ad nauseam.* Yet Mr. Hartman closes his book with a eulogy of Swedenborg; who, although admittedly *possessed* of *devils* at times, he thinks was sometimes possessed and controlled by good spirits: while Hartman's own experience corroborated the Scriptures, that they are *all* "wicked," "seducing," "lying" spirits.

MANY POSSESSED OF DEVILS TODAY

In a pamphlet entitled—"The Nature of Insanity; its Cause and Cure,"—by J. D. Rhymus, the author shows that in many cases insanity is merely *demoniacal possession* or "obsession." He says,—

"In *my own case* I know that the brain was not diseased at all; my whole nature seemed to be intensified by conflicting emotions raging within my breast. I was completely enveloped and pervaded by thought, or in other words thought came as something impinged upon me, seeking expression through me, without being coined or generated by the action of my own brain, although fully conscious at the time, as I am now, that I possessed a strength within me not my own will and brain power so-called;—yet it was so blended with, and manifested through my own powers of action, that I felt great exhaustion of nerve force and mental prostration when the conditions subsided."

After detailing his own case and his release from the thraldom of evil spirits, whom he supposed to be the spirits of wicked dead men (apparently he also was a follower of Swedenborg), he quotes a letter from a Philadelphia physician, dated Nov. 12, 1884, as follows:—

"The young lady to whom you refer in your letter is a Miss S——, who was once my patient and quite intimate in my family. Her father was a sea captain, and was lost at sea, no one knowing when or where. Her anxiety to learn something of his fate, led her to apply to a spirit medium. She was found to be very 'susceptible' and a remarkable medium. She did nothing to encourage the approach of spirits; but they came all the same. They almost tormented the life out of her for a long time—how long I do not remember. They often made her get out of bed at night and perform all sorts of grotesque antics. She finally drove them off by repeating the Lord's Prayer on their every approach. Your sincere friend, ———."

The same writer says:—

"Judge Edmonds of New York [a noted spiritist and both a clairvoyant and clairaudient medium—now deceased], has recently expressed the opinion that many so-called lunatics in asylums are only under the influence of spirits." The Judge himself said,—'Some fifteen cases of insanity, or rather *obsession*, I have been instrumental in curing. This I said to the Academy of Science, in New York.'

"The Judge has had Catholic priests, after a thorough trial of their 'holy water and prayers,' send [to him] their mediumistic members when wickedly disordered, to be demagnetized and released from the grasp of obsessional spirits."

SPIRITISM REVIVING

Few are aware to what extent Spiritism is now active; how it is gradually *reviving.* Here is an account of Dr. Peebles' visit to Melbourne, Australia, this year, 1897. He writes to *The Philadelphia Journal* as follows:—

"Although I had come for a rest, I was immediately pressed into active service, and have been lecturing every Sunday evening either in the Masonic hall (which seats 1300) or the Lyceum (700), both of them being filled at times to overflowing. I have also spoken in the Unitarian and Swedenborgian churches, and the Australian (Presbyterian) church, on vegetarianism and other reform subjects.

"Several mediums speak about coming to Australia. Before leaving, let me tell you that the Melbourne press says there are already 500 mediums in the city and suburbs, while others say 200, but I see none who compare with Mrs. Freitag, and others. I cannot, conscientiously, encourage mediums to come to Australia, unless they are absolutely *first-class test mediums.* That's what the people clamor for—tests, tests, tests. Old, bald headed spiritualists, who had tests years ago, want them renewed, and so seek for tests instead of going on to a higher plane of harmony, beauty and spiritual truth, becoming their own mediums."

Yes; the tests, rapping, writing, table tipping, and even materialization tests are only the beginnings of Spiritism, and not the desired ends sought by the spirits. The end sought is *possession* "obsession;" and those who by strong self-control constantly resist absolute spirit-control are used as "test mediums," to catch others, and to exhort others, as above, to go *"on to a higher plane of harmony"* with lying, seducing, enslaving and demonizing spirits.

An English journal called *Black and White* gives a detailed and illustrated account of recent apparitions at the town of Tilly-sur-Seulles, Normandy, France. It says that the apparitions are of the Virgin Mary and have continued for several months, and are thoroughly vouched for. It adds:—

"The appearances, which seldom or never resemble each other even to the same *voyants*, always either ascend from the earth, as in the case of those of the Witch of Endor, or appear gradually bit by bit, first a leg, then an arm, and so on, at a slight elevation. All this is very queer reading.

"The trampled field of oats, the elm tree stripped of its branches by relic-hunters, the torn hedge protected by barbed wire and decorated with statues, pictures, rosaries, pots of flowers and votive tapers, remain to testify to a belief in the supernatural not less strong than it was in mediæval times."

Black and White, after quoting from the *Croix du Calvados* (the official organ of the Roman Catholic Bishop of the diocese), that, "Although it cannot doubt the *fact* of the appearances, it is inclined more and more to attribute them to *diabolic intervention*," adds:—

"If anything, this is calculated to lend them still greater interest in the eyes of the world which, at the end of the nineteenth century, shows itself especially ready to dabble in Satanism, crystal-gazing, astrology, theosophy, spiritualism and magic, both black and white. The chief points in favor of this clerical decision seem to be that one Vintras, who lived in an old mill, still standing on the banks of the Seuilles, below the older village of Tilly, prophesied these apparitions about the year '30. Vintras was condemned as a sorcerer and incarcerated at Caen by request of Pope Gregory XVI. He claimed to have been 'inspired' by the Archangel Michael. Curiously enough, another 'prophet,' claiming to be inspired by another Archangel, Gabriel, to wit,—namely Mlle. Cuedon, who has made a stir in Paris lately, and whom a certain Abbe

declares to be *'possessed'* rather than *'inspired,'* prophesied these same apparitions at Tilly a fortnight before they began."

Satan's motto seems to be, Anything to deceive and bewilder humanity and to hinder the truth now due to them from reaching them. From an English Spiritist journal *Light*, we quote a recent statement of a *seance*, as follows:—

"At a sitting which was being held one evening at the invitation of a mother who had just lost a dearly loved son, amongst other phenomena a remarkable light was seen. It was in the form of a beautiful radiant globe, the center of which was a bright blue of great brilliancy. It was apparently an immeasurable distance away, the wall of the room offering no obstruction to those who watched it, and it remained for about half an hour, when it gradually faded from their sight.

"All present were filled with a sense of *deep reverence and veneration.* The control [*i. e.*, the spirit controlling the medium] explained that this was indeed the Light of Christ, who, in verification of the belief which is now very generally held by Christians of every denomination, is gradually approaching this earth; and in fulfilment of his words, spoken nearly two thousand years ago, is coming to establish his kingdom, the reign of universal love and brotherhood, amongst us.

"The control further said: 'Write thus to the editor of *Light*, Tell him that light is coming to all men. It grows brighter day by day. This light is the Light that should lighten all men that come into the world. Love is embodied in it. Truth is bringing it. Wisdom teaches it. Faith reveals it. Hope nourishes it. Justice craves for it. Glory attends it. Peace claims it. Power waits for it. This remarkable light is attended by hosts of angels; by dwellers in the spheres of the Blest; by mighty conquerors; by those whose sins, being scarlet, now shine radiant in this Light. Perfected good, perfected man, perfected light.

"Beautiful angels surround the medium. The Light appeared behind her; but she was pleased to know that the greatest glory shone when she spoke of Christ's power. Although not herself viewing the greatest glory of the Light she saw it, far, far away, having a star-like radiance."

Just as at his first advent the evil spirits acknowledged Jesus, saying, "We know thee, who thou art." "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God?" and as they testified of the apostles,—"These be the servants of the most high God which show unto us the way of eternal life; *so today, as we have seen*, some of them will testify occasionally to the truth, commend MILLENNIAL DAWN, etc.; but it is safe to assume that it is all for a purpose; as a "bait" for those who are interested or seeking light along these lines, to eventually lead them off into some gross darkness. Let us constantly remember that these deceptions will become so bold, and be apparently so backed by advanced truth that they will, "if it were possible, deceive the very elect."—Matt. 24:24-26.

Under such circumstances there is but one safe course. It is not to stand still with closed eyes, panic stricken: that will be impossible, very soon. It is to fully accept of Christ Jesus the *redeemer*, the *ransomer* of the race as your Saviour and your Teacher, and to be controlled only by his spirit of truth expressed to man through his Word—the Bible. So doing you will be *kept* by the power of God from all the snares of the wicked one; for the *gospel* is the *power of God* unto salvation to every one that [obediently] believeth."

To what great dangers the people of Christendom are exposed we may judge when we remember that nearly all are laboring under the delusion of Satan, first enunciated to mother Eve in Eden,—to her deception and fall. He then said, "Ye shall not surely *die*." He has kept up his side of the controversy since then, and the majority of God's people believe Satan's statement and disbelieve the Lord's word;—holding that no one really dies, but that when death apparently takes place the person is thereby made *"more alive than ever."* Believing that none are really *dead*, we cannot wonder that Christendom totally rejects the Bible doctrine that the only hope for a future life rests in God's promise of a *"resurrection of the* DEAD," and makes nonsense of it by claiming that it is merely a resurrection of the *body* that died —which the Apostle declares will *never be resurrected*—but a new body be substituted when the *soul*, the *being* is resurrected.—1 Cor. 15:12-18 and 36-38.

In evidence of the dangers along this line we note the fact that in a very recent issue, *"The Ram's Horn,"* a radical orthodox journal of Chicago published on its outside cover a colored engraving representing a Christian mother with clasped hands, praying beside a little grave decorated with flowers, while just before her is shown the shadowy outline of her child approaching her. The editor of *The Ram's Horn* and his readers are like all other nominal Christians who neglect the teachings of God's Word on this subject;—*just ready* for Satan's delusions to ensnare them.

Note also the following, clipped from the Jan. 2, '97, issue of *The Philosophical Journal* (spiritualist). Under the caption *"Progressive Thought,"* the editor quotes from Rev. T. De Witt Talmage's discourse of Dec. 6. '96, as follows:—

"Even Talmage has progressed from the old faith and now believes in the return of the spirit to this world of ours after death. On December 6 he preached a sermon at Washington on the 'Celestial World,' showing the employment of 'the departed' in that state of existence. In answer to the question: 'What are the departed doing now?' he said: 'That question is more easily answered than you might suppose,' and adds:—

" 'Their hand has forgotten its cunning, but *the spirit* has faculties as far superior to four fingers and a thumb as the supernatural is superior to the human. The reason that God took away their eye and their hand and their brain, was that he might give them something more limber, more wieldly, more skillful, more multipliant.'

"Dr. Talmage says that the spirits, freed from the material body, are 'more limber, more skillful,' and 'are at their old business yet,' but with vastly improved faculties. He argues it thus:—

" 'Have you any idea that that affluence of faculty at death, collapsed and perished? Why so, when there is more for them to look at, and they have keener appreciation of the beautiful, and they stand amid the very looms where the sunsets and the rainbows and the spring mornings are woven.

" 'Are you so obtuse as to suppose that because the painter drops his easel and the sculptor his chisel, and the engraver his knife, that therefore that taste, which he was enlarging or intensifying for forty or fifty years, is entirely obliterated?

" 'These artists, or friends of art, on earth worked in coarse material and with imperfect brain and with frail hand. Now they have carried their art into larger liberties and into wider circumferences.

" 'They are at their old business yet, but without the fatigues, without the limitations, without the hindrances of the terrestrial studio.'

"In answer to the question as to what the physicians are doing, since they passed to 'the beyond,' he says they 'are busy at their old business,' and adds:

" 'No sickness in heaven, but plenty of sickness *on earth*, plenty of wounds in the different parts of God's dominion to be healed and to be medicated. Those glorious *souls are coming down*, not in lazy doctor's gig, but with lightning locomotion.

" 'You cannot understand why that patient got well after all the skillful doctors had said he must die. Perhaps Abercrombie touched him. I should not wonder if he had been back again to see some of his old patients. Those who had their joy in healing the sickness and the woes of earth, gone up to heaven *are come forth again* for benignant medicament.'

"Then he propounds another question, as to what all the departed are doing now—who in earth life were 'busy, and found their chief joy in doing good.' He replies: They are 'going right on with the work.'

" 'John Howard visiting dungeons; the dead women of Northern and Southern battlefields still abroad looking for the wounded; George Peabody still watching the poor; Thomas Clarkson still looking after the enslaved—all of those who did good on earth, busier since death than before. The tombstone is not the terminus, but the starting-post.'

"He then concludes with this very emphatic language:—

" 'To show you that your departed friends are more alive than they were; to make you homesick for heaven; to give you an enlarged view of the glories to be revealed, I have preached this sermon.'

"Without the slightest doubt then, Dr. DeWitt Talmage is a spiritualist. He does not claim that cognomen, but he teaches the grand tenets of our philosophy and admits the consequent phenomena of the return of the spirit to visit mortals—spirit physicians to *touch* those given up to die by mortal physicians, and to heal them—to visit those in dungeons in order to relieve their distress—to watch the poor—to look after the enslaved—and in this work to be 'busier since death than before!'

"If 'the departed are more alive than they ever were'—as Dr. Talmage affirms in his closing remarks—then it is evident that he was correct in saying that 'the tombstone is

not the terminus, but the starting-post'—the 'door' to the higher life, the entrance to the state of endless labor, grand possibilities, and eternal progression.

"If Dr. Talmage thought more of these grand truths than of his clerical standing, he would frankly avow himself a spiritualist.

"All the churches are rapidly becoming permeated with spiritual philosophy, and soon must either add to their structural confession these grand and inspiring verities, or sink into oblivion in the twentieth century, when the cycle of evolution shall be completely rounded out."

Who can deny the logic of the spiritualist editor in claiming Dr. Talmage as a spiritualist, who refrains from fully acknowledging his identity? Who can doubt that the hundreds of thousands who read that discourse in the many journals which publish Dr. Talmage's discourses regularly, accepted every item of its poisonous, unscriptural suggestion as *gospel;* because in full accord with what they had been taught from other pulpits, and especially at funeral services? Alas! the millions of Christendom are *ready*, ripe, for the evil work of these seducing spirits.

Note the following hand-bill announcement of Spiritist *performances* and tests, given at Muskegon, Michigan, recently: it is in display type and illustrated etchings showing shadowy forms, etc.—and was sent to us through the Lord's providence just in time for a notice here. It reads thus:—

"Opera House, under the auspices of the Religio-Philosophical Society of Boston, Mass., Sunday night, April 11, 1897.

"Spirit materializations, marvelous superhuman visions. Spiritualistic rappings, slate writing, floating tables and chairs, remarkable tests of the human mind, a human being isolated from surrounding objects floating in mid air. Behold the marvels of today! Reflect on the one great question of the hour: Is there a spirit land? and what is the destiny of man? Do you want to be convinced that there is a hereafter? Do you believe in immortality? Do you believe in a soul world? or do you believe that death ends all?

"Dr. Loyd Cooke, preëminently peer of spirit mediums, assisted by a number of mediums of note, on the open stage, will produce some of the most wonderful materializations ever witnessed in this country.

"The following are some of the tests that usually take place in the presence of these mediums: A table rises 4 to 5 feet and floats in mid air. Spirit hands and faces are plainly seen and recognized by their friends. A guitar is played and passed around the room by the invisible power. Flowers are brought and passed to the audience by hands plainly seen. Bells are rung, harps are played, and other tests of a startling nature take place in the presence of these wonderful mediums, if the conditions are strictly complied with.

"A night of wonderful manifestations! The veil drawn so that all may have an insight into the spirit world and behold many things that are strange and startling.

"The clergy, the press, learned synods and councils, sage philosophers and scientists, in fact, the whole world has proclaimed these philosophical idealisms to be an astounding fact. You are brought face to face with the spirits. A large piano is played upon without a living soul touching it. And many spirit forms upon the stage—sometimes eight or ten at a time—are proof positive of the genuineness of these mediums. They have been three years developing for the special purpose of demonstrating the facts of spirit power in full gas light!

"The invisible powers are constantly producing new and startling manifestations to convert the skeptical and strengthen the believer. Come and see for yourself. Take no one's word. Investigate and believe your own eyes. Be guided by your own reason. Believe nothing you hear! Every man and woman has a right to see and think.

"Many ask: 'Is there any truth in Spiritualism?' If you should attend this seance with these new mediums, you would never doubt again that the spirits do re-visit the earth, and can be seen and recognized by their friends. They will stand beside you and shake hands with any one who will ask them. Remember, this seance is not like others you have attended. The forms seen here are not afraid of you, but will come so close to you that you cannot doubt their identity, and will satisfy you that they are not flesh of this earth. No one who has ever attended these seances can doubt the genuineness of these mediums. Remember, these are newly developed mediums, just arrived at this place, and are recognized by all that have seen them to have the most powerful circle that has ever been brought to this country. Not in darkness, but in open light. You feel their touch. You see their disembodied forms. In plain, open light! Every possible means will be used to enlighten the auditors as to whether these so-called wonders are enacted through the aid of spirits or are the result of natural agencies.

"Committees will be selected by the audience to assist, and to report their views as to the why and wherefore of the many very strange things that will be shown during the evening. This is done so that every person attending may learn the truth regarding the tests, whether they are genuine or caused by expert trickery. Doors open at 7.15. Commences at 8. A small admission will be charged.

SPIRITS NOW ORGANIZE "CHURCHES"

Finding that churchianity is popular, and a certain amount of formalism demanded by the people they seek to ensnare, spirits are organizing "churches" for the "worship" and "praise" of the "All Good,"—the name they use instead of God. But since advanced Spiritists do not believe in a *personal* God this name merely represents to them—*all good spirits,* among whom they reckon Thomas Paine, Shakespeare, Judas and Nero, as well as Christ, Confucius and Buddha. In these "churches"—"Spiritualist," "Theosophical" and "Christian Scientists," all of the same cult, and all guided (unknown to many of their votaries) by the same master spirit—Satan—the preachers and evangelists are generally women: in marked contrast (whatever the explanation) with the course pursued by the true Head of the one and only true church, our Lord Jesus,—who appointed twelve apostles and seventy evangelists, all of them men.

The newspapers gave an account of a spiritist baptism service, at the "First Church of Spiritualists," Pittsburg, on Sunday, Dec. 13, '96, by Mrs. Ida Whitlock, of Boston, as follows:—

"When the babies' parents and godmothers had been assembled, deacons of the church brought out a long flower decked rope, which they tied about the participants in the ceremony. Mrs. Whitlock gave each baby a small bunch of carnations, handing them from a silver bowl. Having completed this ceremony, Mrs. Whitlock took another silver bowl, and, advancing to each baby, she dipped into the bowl a rose and sprinkled the faces of those to be baptized, saying as she did so, 'I, Ida Whitlock, *by a power commissioned to me,* do baptize thee, Anna Maria Klotz, in the name of the *All Good.*' Alderman Klotz, of Allegheny, is the father of this child."

The power commissioned to Mrs. Whitlock was certainly not from the Father, nor from the Son, nor by the holy Spirit; and we feel confident it was from the one who backs all the tests and tricks and lies and obsessions:—"*Your adversary* the Devil."—1 Pet. 5:8.

"IN THE SECRET CHAMBER"

Brother Thori of St. Paul, Minn., sends us the card of a Dr. Snyder of that city, who styles himself a Christian Spiritualist and claims that he and others there hold regular seances in which the Lord as a spirit being shows himself to their mortal eyes. He says that about forty persons there have seen these manifestations. Three of them received "the communion" direct from the Lord's hand. The card received bears sixteen texts from the Bible, among which are the following:—

"God is a spirit."

"I am the light of the world."

"He that keepeth my commandments, he it is that loveth me; and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father; and I will love him, and *will manifest myself to him.*"—John 14:21.

In large type at the head of the card are these words:—

"HAVE YOU SEEN THE LORD? IF NOT, WHY NOT?"

Brother Thori remarks that the Doctor appears to be very pious, and professes faith in the ransom and in restitution. The incident at once reminded Brother T. of the statement of MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II., page 158, which reads as follows:—

"Among other such things some of them even teach that Christ is *present,* and we doubt not ere long they will give *seances* at which they will claim to show him 'in the secret chamber.'" (Matt. 24:26.) Brother T. called the Doctor's attention to the Scripture and this application of it; but he was so enamored by the seducing spirits that he could make no application of it to his own experiences. He declared that it referred to such preposterous frauds as Schweinfurth.

Here we see more of Satan's policy: he works one fraud against another. A few weak-minded people are deluded into thinking and claiming that they are "some great one"—Christs, etc.,—and by the hypnotic powers deluding a few into their "heavens," thus disgust more sensible people, who, be-

lieving that these frauds *fulfill* the scope of our Lord's warning, are off guard against the much more subtle deceptions of Spiritism which draw nearer and nearer daily.

Then again, true to his character as a deceiver, Satan begins all such performances with the outwardly devout. He puts a bait on his hook when he fishes for men. It will be found that *self-willed* Christians, no matter what their morals or faith, will be subject to snares of the great enemy. The full submission of the *will* to the will of God as expressed in his Word is absolutely necessary to overcome the world, the flesh and the devil.

"WE ARE NOT IGNORANT OF HIS DEVICES"

We will no doubt surprise some when we state that to our understanding "Christian Science," "Theosophy," "Mesmerism," "Clairvoyance" and "Hypnotism," as well as "Swedenborgianism," are all related to Spiritism, and designed by the "seducing spirits" to enthral and "pass along" the various classes of mankind who are now awakening out of mental lethargy; and to blind their eyes to the *truth* respecting the Lord and his Word.—2 Cor. 4:4.

"*Christian Science*" by its attractive but deceptive name, no less than by its lying proposition that there is no pain, no sickness, no death, no sin, no devil, no Saviour—nor need of any—by the very absurdity of its claims attracts the curious; and by its seeming harmlessness and "good works" ensnares the unguarded and uninstructed, who do not know "the depths of Satan." (Rev. 2:24.) Their processes for treatment of "*imagined*" diseases seem harmless, but are their cures therefore less of the demons and more of God than those of Spiritualists? While a pure faith in the first principles of the doctrines of Christ is not to be accepted as *instead* of good morals, the latter are nevertheless to be considered as *concomitants* to every manifestation of divine favor and power. All, therefore, who deny our Lord Jesus as the *Redeemer* of mankind "who gave his life *a ransom price* for many," are not of God, and their "wonderful works," whether good or bad, are not to be credited to divine power.*

It may be questioned by some whether Satan and his associates can be charged on the one hand with causing sickness and death (Heb. 2:14), and on the other hand with healing the sick and casting out devils. Would not this seem to be an opposition to his own kingdom not supposable of any intelligent being. "If Satan cast out Satan he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand?"—Matt 12:25, 26; Mark. 3:24-26.

Very true; and this shows to what straits "the prince of this world" is reduced by the great increase of intelligence shining in upon the world during the past century. The demons must sham to be "angels of *light*," teachers of advanced truths and good physicians, both of souls and bodies, in order to reënsnare those who are feeling after God, if haply they might find him. (Acts 17:27) The words of inspiration give us to understand that Satan's struggles to retain control of mankind will be specially desperate at its close—before he is "bound" for the thousand years that he may deceive the nations no more.—Rev. 20:1.

Here will be one of the "*strong delusions*" mentioned by the Apostle Paul, to cope with which God's people will have need of "the whole armor God" that they "*may be able to stand* in this evil day." (2 Thes. 2:9-12; Eph. 6:11-13) We are now in the period of which he cautions us to be specially on guard against "seducing spirits and doctrines of devils." (1 Tim. 4:1) Here the Apostle Peter tells us to "beware lest ye also being led away [seduced] by the error of the wicked [one] fall from your own steadfastness." (2 Pet. 3:17) Hence the Lord tells us to watch and pray to escape the delusions which will be so strong as to "deceive if it were possible the very elect." (Matt. 24:24) Shall we, in view of these warnings, expect no "strong delusions," deceptions from the wicked spirits? Nay; we expect far more during the next few years than even Spiritists have dreamed of.

SATANIC POWERS MALIFIC

But if Satan and his faithful have a knowledge of curative agencies and skill in their application let us not forget that he has great malific power also. This has already been demonstrated. Take the case of Jannes and Jambres, the celebrated mediums and magicians of Egypt, who in the presence of Pharaoh duplicated many of the miracles performed by divine power through Moses and Aaron. They could transform their rods into serpents; they also turned water into blood; they also produced frogs, altho they could not duplicate the plagues of lice, etc.—Exod. 7:11, 22; 8:7.

We have every reason to believe that the fallen spirits have learned considerable during the past four thousand years and that they have a much wider range of power today. We are inclined to believe that the grasshopper plagues and the multitudinous farmer-pests and the spores and microbes of disease that are afflicting human and animal life in recent times, may be manifestations of the same power for evil. Similarly Satan is "the prince of the power of the air," and is malevolent enough to exercise his powers to the extent of divine permission. This might account in part for the great floods, cyclones and tornadoes of recent years.

But surely such forces of nature are not left in the charge of demons? some one inquires.

Not entirely;—most assuredly not; otherwise we may doubt if the world would be at all habitable. Take the case of Job: as soon as divine restraints upon Satan were released, he moved the Sabeans to steal Job's cattle and to kill his servants; he caused fire to come down from heaven, which not only killed but burned up Job's flocks of sheep; he sent the Chaldeans who stole Job's camels, and finally produced a cyclone which smote the house in which Job's children were feasting together, and destroyed the house and killed its occupants; and he attacked Job's person with disease as soon as granted permission.—Job. 1:9-2:7.

EVIL SPIRITS AND "THE TIME OF TROUBLE"

There is no question that Satan and his legions are as able and as willing as ever to do all the mischief that divine wisdom may see fit to permit them to do. It only remains, therefore, to notice that God has not only foretold that he will permit them to have great power in the end of this age, but also why he does so. He tells us that he is about to "pour out his indignation, even all his fierce anger," upon the world of mankind, as a chastisement for sin and for a correction toward righteousness; to humble mankind and to prepare them for the blessings of the Millennial kingdom. All are familiar with the plagues foretold in the book of Revelation about to be poured upon the world in the end and judgment of this age. Of these the plagues upon Egypt were illustrations,—even tho the coming plagues be described in symbols. But let us always remember God's care over his people to preserve them from every calamity which would not under divine supervision work out for them some valuable lesson or experience, and let us remember that he is able and willing to overrule the wrath of men and of devils and to restrain whatever would hinder his grand purposes.

The following words of Rev. A. B. Simpson are quite to the point:—

"The healing of diseases is also said to follow the practices of Spiritualism and Animal Magnetism, Clairvoyance, etc. We will not deny that while some of the manifestations of Spiritualism are undoubted frauds, there are many that are unquestionably supernatural, and are produced by forces for which Physical Science has no explanation. It is no use to try to meet this terrific monster of Spiritualism, in which, as Joseph Cook says, is, perhaps, the great IF of our immediate future in England and America, with the hasty and shallow denial of the facts, or their explanation as tricks of legerdemain. They are often undoubtedly real and superhuman. They are the spirits of devils working miracles, gathering men for Armageddon. They are the revived forces of the Egyptian magicians, the Grecian oracles, the Roman haruspices, the Indian medicine-men. They are not divine, they are less than omnipotent, but they are more than human. Our Lord has expressly warned us of them, and told us to test them, not by their power, but by their fruits, their holiness, humility and homage to the name of Jesus and the *Word of God;* and their very existence renders it the more imperative that we should be able to present against them—like the rod of Moses which swallowed the magicians, and at last silenced their limited power,—the living forces of a holy Christianity."

In conclusion let spiritual Israel hear the Word of the Lord to fleshly Israel:—

"When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, thou shalt not learn to do after THE ABOMINATIONS OF THOSE NATIONS. There shall not be found among you *any one* that . . . . USETH DIVINATION, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with *familiar spirits*, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For *all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord;* and *because of these abominations* the Lord thy God doth drive them out from before thee."—Deut. 18:9-12.

"When they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep and mutter: Should not a people SEEK UNTO THEIR GOD? on behalf of the LIVING should they seek unto the DEAD? To the law and the testimony: if they speak not according to this word it is because there is no light in them."—Isa. 8:19-20.

* For an examination of "Christian Science" see ZION'S WATCH TOWER of May, 1891.

PREACHING TO ATHENIAN PHILOSOPHERS

JULY 25.—ACTS 17:22-34.

"God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."—Jno. 4:24.

Altho the Jews of Berea received the message of Christ in a proper spirit and searched the Scriptures daily for the proofs of the gospel, a measure of persecution was at least threatened there. The Jews of Thessalonica, hearing of the progress of the gospel amongst their brethren at Berea, went thither for the express purpose of fomenting strife and hindering the gospel. Satan seems always to have plenty of agents ready and willing to oppose the truth—frequently blindly, as in Paul's own case.

We do not know that there was much persecution at Berea: the brethren merely saw that it would follow, and judged it to be the wiser plan that the Apostle Paul, who was always the chief object of attack, should at once withdraw. The absence of his powerful testimony left nothing for the opposers to contend against, and they probably speedily withdrew, satisfied with having, as they supposed, put a stop to the influence of the gospel, by chasing Paul away. But Silas remained with the Bereans, to strengthen and establish them, as Timothy had remained at Thessalonica, and Luke at Philippi, for similar reasons. Thus Paul was alone when he came to Athens the center of the world's civilization, religious philosophy and art, at that time, as indeed it had been for several centuries. It was a college city, where resided the most eminent philosophers of the world as instructors in its great colleges to which came the brightest and ablest thinkers of the world. Some one has said of Athens: "In its prime it sent forth more great men in one hundred years than all the rest of the world could show in five hundred." Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, Sophocles, Aristides, Phidias, Zeno, Epicurus, Xenophon and Themistocles, still of world-wide renown, were sons of this famous city.

It would appear that there were no Jews in Athens, and this was doubtless for two reasons: (1) The Jews had a religious philosophy of their own which would have been in continual conflict with these heathen philosophies. (2) Not interested in heathen philosophies, nothing would draw them to Athens, except commerce, and Athens was not a commercial or manufacturing city. Finding no synagogue, the Apostle wandered through the streets of Athens, noting the endeavor of its people to reach, by mental philosophy, a knowledge of God, while ignorant of the holy Scriptures, the revelation of the only true God. In a city so given over to philosophical speculations, it is not surprising that such questions were discussed in the streets, in the market places and wherever its intelligent, cultured citizens came in contact with each other or with strangers. As an educated man the Apostle was well versed in the various speculations of the day, and had besides the philosophy of the divine plan which others had not.

Where the Jews were the auditors one-half of the preaching would do, for they already knew the one living and true God and acknowledged him; they already knew of Moses and the law, and of how Moses had foretold Messiah; and they were already waiting for this long promised Messiah. To such the Apostle merely needed to present the evidences that Christ fulfilled in every particular the predictions of the prophets. But with these Athenians even the true God was not known. Hence, the first point in preaching to them was to establish faith in Jehovah; the second, to establish faith in the prophets as his mouth-pieces, and then third, to prove that Christ fulfilled the predictions of the prophets. This was the Apostle's first contact with undiluted heathenism, and he began by talking as the others did, in the market places, on the subject of the true God.

Noting that the Apostle was consistent and logical in his remarks, some of the leading men made an appointment for him to give a public address before the Council of the Areopagus, which occupied chief seats in the auditorium on Mars Hill, and was surrounded at its sitting with the intelligent population of this metropolis of philosophy.

For the first time the Gospel is preached to the most learned and most scientific, according to the estimate of this world,—by its most able exponent on earth. We note with intense interest the method of presentation employed, and the results obtained. It was necessary first of all that these philosophers should learn of their error in supposing that there are many gods, and come to understand that there is but one living and true God, the Father, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, his Son: then they would be prepared to see how the Father's law was infracted through sin; how a ransom was necessary, and that Christ came into the world and died and rose again for the justification of sinners, and their release from sin's penalty,—death.

We are impressed with the wisdom of the Apostle's method of procedure in addressing a congregation so cultured in error. Our Common Version (v. 33) does the Apostle great injustice, by representing him as beginning his discourse by insulting his hearers;—telling them that they were "too superstitious." What he did say to them signified, "You are reverential to an extreme; for as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription—'To the unknown God.' Whom, therefore, you worship [admittedly] without knowledge [of his name and character], him declare I unto you." What a lesson we have here of presenting the truth with wisdom, in meekness and in love.

Our respect for the Apostle's method is increased when we know that the Athenians considered themselves so well supplied with gods that they had passed a law inflicting the death penalty upon any one who would set forth in their midst any foreign god not previously recognized in their city. (Possibly this helps to account for the absence of Jews.) Thus the Apostle seized upon the only opportunity for presenting to his hearers the true God without risking his own life, by calling attention to the fact that *they already recognized and offered worship to the true God*, altho ignorant of his name. Such masterly wisdom must have had weight with so intelligent an audience: and apparently the Apostle received a careful hearing as he described some of the characteristics of Jehovah—far above and beyond anything which his hearers had ever claimed for their divinities.

The secret of the Apostle Paul's success, and the reason why God used him so graciously as a servant, is a lesson which all who attempt to serve the truth to others would do well to note and to apply to themselves. Was it not because he preached not himself but the Lord and his gospel? Do not many would-be teachers fail to attain results and to be more used of the Lord because their ambition really preaches self, and the gospel as a means for calling attention to self;—and do not others combine self-glorification with the gospel, and thus obtain only partial results for the Lord? The Apostle's course was self-abandonment, as he explained, "I determined to know nothing among you save Christ, and him crucified." (1 Cor. 2:2) His knowledge on other subjects was all sunk out of sight. It is for this reason that many comparatively ignorant men have been greatly used of the Lord in the gospel service—great learning in the philosophies often proving a snare, a temptation to preach these and to make a show among men rather than to preach the divine philosophy—redemption through the blood of the cross. Let us all copy the Lord and his greatly used and thus approved servant, Paul, until the expression of our every word and act will be

"None of self and all of Thee."

Athens was full of idols and temples representing the homage to deities of various degrees of distinction. Pliny, the historian, informs us that in Nero's day Athens contained more than 3,000 public statues—of gods of various grades and of notable human heroes. In one street there stood before every house a square pillar supporting a bust of the god Hermes, and every gate-way and porch had its protecting god. Paul preached (1) a God so great that he not only could not be made by human hands, but that all things, both in heaven and in earth, were his creation; (2) a God who needed no temple or house; (3) a God so great that nothing could be done for him, seeing that he himself is the Creator of the world and the author of every good gift, including life itself; (4) that all the human family evidenced his handiwork, and all from one source or parent; and (5) that God had in general one great plan with reference to the entire human family. All this was very different from the confused ideas presented by the philosophers respecting various gods and the competition and strife between them as between human heroes.

Having set forth the character of God, the next point was to show that all God's creation should *seek* him, that he is nigh unto all that call upon him; for his power and intelligence are everywhere present. Seizing upon a truthful statement by one of their poets to the effect that all mankind are God's offspring, the Apostle endorses this, and then points out that this, being true, it logically follows that images of gold, silver and stone could not properly represent this great God.

Anticipating the question in their minds—If there is so great a God why has he not previously manifested himself to us? and why has he permitted us to look to and to worship other gods? and would he not be very angry with us, because

of this false worship? the Apostle answers, No; the past period of ignorance God entirely overlooks: You are not charged with responsibility for rejecting that of which you did not know. But, *now* this great God has sent forth his gracious message, that all men everywhere should come to a knowledge of him, repent of sins and seek to do his will.

Here is a definite statement from an inspired source informing us that the millions who lived and died in heathen darkness prior to the coming of Christ are not held responsible and will not be punished for that ignorance. And the same principle can logically be applied to all since who have not known of Christ and of the redemption through his blood. All of these must yet come to a knowledge of the truth.

But note the Apostle's reasoning: God has appointed a day of trial ("judgment") for the whole human family, in which Christ will be the righteous Judge, and in which every man—the whole world—will have a righteous trial, a fair opportunity of accepting divine favor and eternal life, or of rejecting these and receiving the wages of sin, the second death. Here, the Apostle was able to bring Christ to the attention of his hearers. The little portion of the discourse set before us omits all mention of a redemption by the second Adam, before any blessing of life or even a trial for life eternal could be offered to any: doubtless, however, this was part of the discourse, set forth along the same lines as the Apostle's argument in Romans 5 and in 1 Cor. 15.

In logical order, it was necessary that the Apostle would present the doctrine of the resurrection. (1) He must show that Christ, having died for our sins, did not remain dead, but was raised up and clothed with authority and power to be the Deliverer in due time of those whom he had purchased with his own blood. (2) He must show that the ignorant ones of preceding centuries, as they had shared the Adamic penalty, would have an opportunity also of sharing the benefits of the atonement, and he must therefore show that, altho the penalty, death, was justly enforced against all, yet God purposed an awakening from death for all mankind; and a complete resurrection to the condition enjoyed by Adam before the fall, to all who would render obedience to the Redeemer when he would be the Judge. (The mention of the high calling and the way of full consecration leading to it, he reserved for such as would accept justification.)

The Apostle held the attention of his hearers and evidently made considerable impression until it came to this last part of his discourse. But the doctrine of the resurrection ran counter to all their latest philosophical deductions which were to the effect that death is merely a change to a higher form of life. According to their philosophy there could be no resurrection of the *dead;* for they believed that there were no dead. These philosophers had become so thoroughly imbued with the sentiments wherewith Satan deceived mother Eve ("Ye shall not surely die") that they were ready and willing to reject what they must have conceded was the grandest philosophy respecting the Deity that they had ever heard. This same error has been a stumbling block to many, hindering them from seeing the beauty and consistency of the divine plan.

The Apostle's efforts were not wholly without fruitage, for one of the Professors of the university, Dionysius, and a lady of note, Damaris, and some others believed, but evidently not satisfied with the prospect for future service, the Apostle departed for Corinth. Aside from the general lesson of this narrative other valuable lessons may be drawn.

(1) As Athens, the seat of learning, was full of idols, so the heart, even tho enriched with earthly wisdom, may be full of idols and wholly lacking of any proper conception of the great Creator and his plan. Many cultured minds have nevertheless idols of selfishness, passions, earthly ambitions and love of falsehoods, to such an extent as to reject the sublime testimony of the gospel, even when brought to their attention.

(2) Culture and refinement are not always accompaniments and indications of the Lord's presence and the light of his grace, but quite frequently are hindrances; in that they give a measure of satisfaction which serves as a substitute for Christ and his Gospel.

(3) Forms of worship are not acceptable with God: the Athenians were worshipful and reverential to an extreme. God not only seeks worshipers who have the true spirit of worship, but he arranged also that these shall have a knowledge of the truth, so that they may worship in truth, according to the truth. Hence, the declaration, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." A knowledge of the truth is essential before we can worship in spirit and in truth. As a spirit of worship without the truth is not sufficient or accepted, much more a knowledge of truth is not sufficient nor acceptable without a spirit of worship.

GOD'S PEOPLE IN CORINTH

AUGUST 1.—ACTS 18:1-11.

"Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. 3:11.

Corinth as a city was almost the opposite of Athens. Corinth was as completely given over to commerce and sinful pleasures as Athens was given over to religious philosophy and idol worship. We have seen what poor success attended the gospel amongst the superstition-blinded philosophers of the religious metropolis; and we feel curious to know whether its effect will be more or less amongst the non-religious of Corinth. The Lord's testimony settles the matter. In a vision he encouraged the Apostle not to be afraid but to speak boldly, assuring him that he would be with him and protect him; adding,—"*I have much people in this city.*"

Here we see the principle of the divine policy in respect to the sending forth of the gospel. The Lord knew the honest-hearted ones beforehand; and even tho they did not know him, and had not yet accepted of Christ, "the only name," God nevertheless spoke of things to come as tho they already were accomplished, and called the earnest ones who hungered and thirsted after righteousness *his people.* When we remember that the Lord specially directed the Apostle into Macedonia and suffered him to remain but a short time in the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica and Athens, and that his stay in Corinth was for a year and a half, and then note these words,—"I have much people in this city," it gives us the thought that the objective point of this missionary tour in the divine program was Corinth. And indeed, at the close of his ministry in Corinth the Apostle was sent nowhere else, but took his journey homeward, visiting enroute the churches he had previously established in Asia-Minor. What a lesson we have here of the divine superintendence of his own Word and plan! what an illustration of the statement, "The Lord knoweth them that are his;" and that our God is "the same yesterday, today and forever!" He still knows his own; he still superintends his work; he still sends through appropriate agents and at the proper season just such helps as are needful to his people.

Every laborer (every public and every private laborer in the vineyard) should mark the lesson which the Lord has here set before us. And each should the more carefully watch for the leadings of divine providence and realize that only as he is a co-worker together with God can he accomplish anything. As the Master said, "Without me ye can do nothing."

Every minister of the gospel (and this includes all who serve the Lord in any degree or capacity) can find in the Apostle Paul a most wonderful lesson of practical humility. Upon entering Corinth he did not look up some philosopher and endeavor to ingratiate himself with him as a fellow-philosopher and teacher, who could not dig and was ashamed to beg. He did nothing which would compromise the truth, and his influence or liberty as a servant of the truth. Like all Jews of that time he had learned a trade and he at once set to work to earn an honest living, while seeking the door of opportunity for his great life-work, the preaching of the gospel. His trade, tent-making, was a good one in the sense that it afforded employment in every seaport town; but a poor one in that not being difficult, it had much competition, and was poorly paid. Nevertheless, there is not the slightest intimation that the Apostle repined or in any degree rebelled against the leadings of divine providence, altho he probably queried why it was that the Lord, who had specially called and commissioned him to the work of the Gospel, had so circumstanced him that it was impossible to give any but the fag-ends of his time to this service to which he had devoted himself, and to which he had been accepted. Under the leadings of divine providence he became acquainted with Aquilla and Priscilla, poor Jews, outcasts for their religion, who were earning their living by the same trade. Their troubles had no doubt mellowed their hearts and made them ready for the gospel of Christ, and the Lord brought it first to their humble dwelling, and they became devoted servants of the Lord's cause.

The Apostle was fervent in spirit and not slothful in the great business to which his life was devoted; and hence he lost no opportunity of looking up the Jews of Corinth

and attending the Sabbath services in their synagogue. Apparently, however, the difficulties and persecutions endured tended to make the Apostle cautious, if by any means he might improve upon the methods of the past, by the use of greater wisdom. We see how he left Thessalonica and then Berea as the persecution manifested itself; and we see that he studiously sought to avoid persecution at Athens; and now at Corinth apparently he did not start out to preach Christ boldly to the Jews, but rather reasoned with them, and with certain Gentiles who were feeling after God, for a number of Sabbath days, along general lines; as a preparation for the great message he had to deliver. He persuaded both Jews and Greeks with reference to the Law, its types and ceremonies and sacrifices; and with reference to the significance of the prophecies; but he avoided that which would awaken prejudice until he would first arouse faith and fervor in his hearers, and their confidence in his sincerity, and in his fidelity to the Lord's Word.

But when Silas and Timothy joined him, the opportune moment came: and the Apostle felt such a pressure of earnest desire to make known the Lord Jesus, as the grand hope of Israel and the world, that he could keep it back no longer and spoke it forth.

Then came the opposition and blasphemy which previous experiences had warned him to expect: but by this time he had made some impression, not only upon some of the Jews, but upon the religiously disposed Greeks, who had been interested in Judaism. Forseeing that thereafter the Jews would consider him an intruder in their synagogue, he withdrew, accepting as a place for meetings the home of Justus, who apparently was a Greek convert first to Judaism, and now to Christianity. This change would make it more favorable to all Greeks to come and hear, and at the same time being near the synagogue would keep the Gospel of Christ before the attention of the Jews. The result was that "much people," the Lord's people, were found by the truth, including the ruler of the synagogue and many citizens of Corinth.

Had the Apostle been either a cold or a lukewarm Christian and servant of the Lord, or one of the "fearful and unbelieving" kind, he might have attended the synagogue and for years kept his "light under a bushel;" and in such an event it probably would shortly have become extinguished, according to the divine rule; and he would have lost his place as a servant of the gospel and some one else who had a sufficiency of faith, love and zeal would have been permitted to do the work. But the Apostle never kept his light under a bushel, but lifted it high that all might see the glorious light of the goodness of God as it shines in the face of Jesus Christ our Lord, which had shone into his heart. He continually showed forth "the praises of him who had called him out of darkness into his marvelous light."

Judging from his past experiences, the Apostle might have expected persecution which would have permitted him to stay but a short time in Corinth. It was probably for his instruction in this particular that he was granted the vision, instructing him that God would protect him from persecution here, because he had much people to be reached by the truth. Nevertheless, it was necessary and the Lord's instruction, that he should speak the truth boldly and not hold his peace, nor expect that the Lord would work a miracle to reach his people in Corinth without a public testimony.

It was during this stay in Corinth that the Apostle received a loving contribution for his support from the converts at Philippi, which gave evidence that Luke, who remained with them, was performing a faithful ministry and stirring up their hearts with zeal for the Lord and his service. It was during this period, also that he received through Silas and Timothy a good message from the Churches at Thessalonica and Berea; and it was during this stay in Corinth also that the two letters were written to the Church at Thessalonica. Nevertheless, it is respecting this very period of his stay in Corinth that the Apostle subsequently wrote to the Corinthians (1:4; 2:3); in which he mentions his weakness (bodily sickness) and "fear and trembling;" probably the result partly of his weak physical condition and of the remembrance of the trying experiences already passed through.

Subsequently he writes apparently referring back to experiences at Corinth,—"Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; and labor, working with our own hands. Being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we entreat. We are made the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day."—1 Cor. 4:11-13.

Every servant of the truth today can find rich lessons in the experiences and faithfulness and perseverance of the great Apostle. In infinite wisdom the Lord permitted this his chiefest servant amongst men, next to the Lord Jesus, to preach the truth under unfavorable circumstances and with many drawbacks. Paul learned that the servant is not above his Master; and so must every other faithful follower learn the same lesson of faithfulness and endurance—overcoming self and difficulties in the name and strength of the Lord and his Word: upheld by loving zeal and by the exceeding great and precious promises of the Father's Word. In due time we shall reap the reward, if we *faint not* by the way.

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OUR "PILGRIMS"

The extreme heat and other considerations have necessitated slight changes of program for several of the traveling brethren; but in all cases where positive appointments had been made we were enabled to give timely notice: we hope that no serious inconvenience was experienced. Brother Ransom took unwell; Brother Cone is aged and needs a little rest; Brother McPhail's son took sick and has since died; and others had various hindrances. Remember these all with us at the throne of grace.

On the whole we have reason to rejoice that the Lord's blessing seems to go with this branch of the service in so wonderful a manner. Many of the scattered ones are reached, in parts we never expected to reach; and the meetings seem to do much good, judged by the letters and reports we receive from all along the various routes.

Whenever there are five or more WATCH TOWER subscribers we make an effort to reach them;—especially if a desire for public or parlor meetings has been *expressed*.

Wherever a positive appointment is made, you may expect it to be kept to the very hour. The routes are mostly arranged at the WATCH TOWER office. One to three days are all that can be spared generally, as the field is large and the laborers are few: so make the best use possible of the "pilgrims," while they are with you.

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

The Christian Endeavor and other societies of "Young People" are keeping well to the front, influentially and otherwise, in religious matters. When we remember that these young people's societies represent about five millions of members, and that the majority of these are no longer very young, we can readily see that within ten years these people will include the most active representatives of normal Christendom. They are likely to have considerable influence in forming the coming Protestant Federation. In view of this, we have been on the lookout for reports of what was accomplished by the recent C. E. Convention at San Francisco, California.

We have seen the report of the President of the Society, congratulating it upon its growth and size, and giving a brief account of his recent trip around the world, in the interest of the Society. But we have as yet seen no report of any important action taken, or even proposed. Indeed it seems to be an immense combination of well-intentioned young people, anxious to do something great—and good, rather than bad. But it scarcely knows what to adopt as its mission. Hitherto this subject has not been so important; for all energies were employed in growing. Now it has corporeal size, and weight of influence, and feels strong, and realizes that it must have a policy and a mission, or else it will look foolish; and it, no doubt, will decide this question shortly.

It is fearful to adopt any very spiritual work or mission; because doctrine is more or less necessary to every such movement, and doctrines must be sedulously avoided, lest they split the organization, and thus wreck all that has so far been attained—size and union. For instance: suppose it were resolved that the Society of Christian Endeavor shall hereafter devote its main energies to Foreign Mission work, among the barbarous and heathen. Questions would at once arise, such as, Shall we determine and expect to convert the world? Shall we understand this to be God's purpose, and that

he has raised us up to do it, and that he will give us success in its full accomplishment? And how quickly can we do this, if it has required eighteen centuries to reach the present degree of development? Or, shall we undertake it merely as a witnessing to all nations, to gather out an elect "little flock"—through whom, at the second advent of Christ God will "bless all the families of the earth"?

Here would be a split at once. Would the Y. P. S. of C. E., as a whole, declare its belief in a pre-millennial advent of Christ, or in a post-millennial advent? It would do neither; but would refuse to discuss the matter, lest it cause division; because some of its most earnest members are on each side of that question. But to avoid the question as to object of work, is to avoid those lines of work which necessitate decision as to object. And so it is with all spiritual questions and activities; they are inseparably connected with faith; and all faith is built upon doctrines—true or false, divine or human.

If, then, these societies are built upon wrong principles for spiritual work (in that they ignore doctrine, the basis of faith, as faith is the basis of spiritual activities), what will they do with their immense organizations, restless as they are for some great activity—some mission?

The next plane of labor, lower than spiritual work, is moral or social or political reform work. For activities in these directions, doctrines are unnecessary, or at least easily avoidable. The faith of a Buddhist, or a Brahmin, or a Christian, need not interfere if the holder thereof will sink every other ambition and work, and devote himself solely to the reform work. But which of these phases of reform work will it probably decide on—the moral, the social, or the political?

These three reforms, all good, are more or less near to religion and spiritual things. Moral reform probably comes nearest—lifting up the depraved and fallen, is next, we may say, to preaching the Gospel, because it helps often to prepare the way for the Gospel. In fact, moral reformers often rank their work far above the commission given by our Lord—"Preach the Gospel to the meek." But the Young People's Societies are not likely to take up that field as their mission; because it is already fairly well occupied. They will want a new work, which will show as distinctly theirs.

The second reform in nearness to religion would naturally be social reform. This is a large field, in which great good to a great number would be possible, if five million Christian men and women were to take hold of it. The world's social conditions sadly need an uplift—the poor need a protecting arm, to help ward off the pinch and grind coming as a result of invention, over-production and monopolies. But this field is apt to be left to Socialists, Populists and Anarchists; for the "Young People" generally feel that they and their benefactors belong to the other side of the question.

This still leaves the door of political reform open; and we incline to believe that these societies will decide that in that direction lies their mission. In some places they are already beginning this work; and of course there are politicians who will be glad of their co-operation, and who will teach them how to make this movement somewhat of a success. But where will this leave the more spiritual work and doctrine and faith within ten years? They will evidently be obsolete—abandoned. The reform movements will come gradually to be considered the real Gospel to the world. And the world will, of course, approve the change; for it never has comprehended spiritual things; these and the cross of Christ have always been foolishness unto it.—1 Cor. 2:12-14.

* * *

Many of the C. E. Societies have adopted yells, similar to those used by college students, and these were freely poured forth as the delegations gathered at their Convention and en route. A published report of the Convention, for instance, says:

"The Colorado delegation came in with a ringing yell:

"Pike's Peak, or Bust!
Pike's Peak, or Bust!
Colorado, Colorado!
Yell we must!"

The editor of one of the Pacific coast journals writes of the Convention delegates under the caption, "Christians Who Yell," as follows:

"There is no other body in the country like that of the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor. It is strictly a religious organization, but it is the best exemplification of muscular Christianity that ever appealed to robust piety. There is nothing sanctimonious about its members or snivveling about its methods. It unites good fellowship with Christian brotherhood, with no affectation of manner, speech or action.

"There is no other religious fraternity which goes to a convention with a college yell and a whoop. The war cry of the Spokane Club: 'Who can? We can, Spokane, Wash., Wash., Wash.,' is not only funny, but it is vastly superior to the ordinary run of baseball club and college yells, which are, indeed, frequently idiotic. The Colorado delegation also has a yell which must be very effective when uttered by a large body.

"The Christian Endeavorers have done more than any other organization to bring into the ranks of a Christian society young men and young women, and especially young men, who are ordinarily disinclined to be regarded as 'good' in the sense of being pious. There are some things which no amount of argument will change, and one of them is the suspicion and even dislike which attaches to too many young men who assume to be leaders in church work. Pastors know this, if they know anything in the world, and young men who are not professing Christians, although they may be good enough as the world goes, also know it. Although the Christian Endeavorers have been the most successful in the new departure, other organizations are awakening to the difficulty which they really have to overcome. The establishment of athletic clubs by the Y. M. C. A., for instance, has done much to impart a manlier tone to the members of that body.

"When, in order to be an acceptable member of a church organization, it is no longer necessary to wear a sanctimonious look and speak with a nasal twang, when a young man feels that he is no longer derided because he is an active church worker or a Sunday School teacher, it will be a great deal better for the churches, and we shall not hear that wail about the worldliness of the present generation. Men with fifty years of experience in English-speaking countries, at least, are aware that there has been a great improvement in the morals of the average young man. The number of those who are addicted to intoxicating drinks in an excessive degree is much smaller, and the experience of physicians is that there is much less unhealthiness due to preventable causes than there used to be, anl the number of stalwart Christians who do not belong to churches is greater.

"The chief cause of this change is the realization by many pastors of the fact that all that is worldly is not vicious; there are songs which are harmless, although they are not hymns; amusements which are not sinful, although they are not strictly in the line of church work. Dancing is no longer condemned as it used to be, nor is whist regarded as an occupation invented by the devil. There never was a time when flirting could be entirely prevented, even by the most rigid disciplinarian and in the most Puritan communities, but it was regarded as a sin by the mistaken judgment of ministers."

* * *

The writer of the foregoing likes the change which he notices, and as much as says that he himself never was one of the over-pious, and is glad to find those of his mind greatly on the increase in numbers and influence. But Christians who have learned the way to God and the "narrow way" of discipleship in following the footsteps of Christ, will take a wholly different view of the change.

If these were claiming to be merely moral or social clubs, there would be no grounds for objection. The objection is to the desecration of the name Christian, to the erroneous thought that every man and woman who does not steal, nor get drunk, nor use vile and profane language, and who is moral and honorable, is therefore a Christian.

Here the ignoring of doctrines has a bad effect. If the doctrines of Free Grace and Election must be avoided, and if it is right to avoid and ignore them, then may not the entire subject of grace be ignored? and may not all faith be ignored as a standard by those who bear the name of Christ? This certainly is the tendency, not only of the young people, but also amongst the older Christians of all denominations. But all who see the Scriptural definition of a Christian falling into disuse and contempt, should be the more careful to hold firmly to "the faith once delivered to the saints," viz., that the steps into "the body of Christ, which is the [true] Church" are (1) Faith in the efficacy of the precious blood of Christ, shed for the remission of sins; (2) acceptance thereof with repentance and reformation; and (3) an unreserved consecration of every talent to the Lord's service.

The reason for such a falling away from doctrine is not difficult to find. It is because the doctrines of God's Word were so terribly mixed with God-dishonoring human traditions. For instance, the doctrine that an eternity of torment awaits all who are not of the elect, has brought the Scriptural doctrines of "an election according to favor" and the perseverance of the saints into disrepute. Intelligent people say to themselves, The saintly are few; the decent, moral and semi-moral

(Prov. 23:12) This implies the study of ourselves, as well as of the divine Word, that we may see just what portions of the Word apply to our individual present necessities. We know that as members of the fallen race we are all afflicted with the malady of sin; and though through faith in Christ, our Redeemer, we are freely forgiven and reckoned of God as free from sin, even this reckoned standing before God, through faith in Christ's merit applied to us, is accorded to us only in view of our hatred of sin, our love of righteousness, and our earnest heart-desire to be pure and holy. It would indeed be a vain thing to trust for eternal life in the imputed righteousness of Christ, and at the same time to love and continue in sin. If any of the world of mankind do so in the next age, they will never reach perfection and eternal life. Accepting first, the favor of redemption through Christ they must then *work out* their salvation by obedience and persevering effort to eradicate sin and put on righteousness. The same principle applies also to the church now on trial. We should ever bear in mind that justification through faith in Christ does not directly, and beyond all peradventure, insure to the believer eternal life; but it does secure that legal standing before God upon which believers, both of this age and the next, must *work out* their salvation with fear and trembling.—Phil. 2:12.

Having, by faith, accepted this legal standing before God, our subsequent course of life must make manifest our heart-desires to be cleansed from all sin: "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid;" for if we continue in sin, the grace of God will not abound; and if we give up the struggle against sin and allow it to take possession of our mortal bodies, the grace of God must eventually be withdrawn.

Sin is a disease inherited from our fallen progenitors: it affects one individual in one way and another in another: and even though, through faith in Christ, we are reckoned of God as free from sin, nevertheless the actual tendencies to sin are still present with us. Like the children of Israel, we are led into Canaan (the rest of faith and of the divine favor), but we have still a great work to do in the way of routing the enemies of righteousness long intrenched there; and for this work both persevering effort and divine grace are needed. While the precious blood of Christ applied by faith is the great atoning remedy for sin whereby we are justified to life, the only restorative remedies are in the law and testimonies of the Word of the Lord, all which would, however, be unavailing except as supplementary to the great atoning remedy; and these must be carefully and prayerfully sought out and applied with persevering effort for our cleansing and healing. To this end it is important also to remember that a correct diagnosis of our case is one of the first essentials to a cure. But who is sufficient for this?—"Who can understand his errors?" who is able to look into his own character and, without prejudice, to mark its defects? Surely none who are intoxicated with the spirit of the world, with pride, or selfishness, or vain glory.

It is for this reason that the Apostle Paul counsels sobriety and humility, saying, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think *soberly*."—Rom. 12:3.

A sober estimate of self is a humiliating, not an exalting, exercise; yet it is healthful and beneficial. It reminds us continually that we are "men of like passions" with other men, and thus enables us not only to strive against our own weaknesses and besetments, but also to sympathize with those of others, and to bear with them as we wish them to bear with us. It makes us continually to realize that our fallen nature gravitates toward sin, and that we must resolutely strive against it or else float with its downward current to destruction.

A sober estimate will remind us too of our mental infirmities; for, however favorably we may compare with some other members of the dying race about us, we are very imbecile as compared with human perfection. How slowly and laboriously does the mind act; how dull are the perceptive faculties; how inert the reasoning powers; how unskilled the judgment; how feebly we discern the great principles of truth, and how stupidly we go about applying them; how repeated are our blunders and failures, and how tedious and slow our progress! Surely no man, however favorably he may compare with some of his fellows, has anything whereof to boast in a *sober* estimate either of his mental or his moral capacity or development as compared with the standard of perfection.

In a sober estimate of character how painfully manifest are those overestimates of pride and vainglory which are due to the intoxicating spirit of the world! How unlovely it is, how absurd and ridiculous, how mean and contemptible, how vain and foolish! and how effectually it impedes progress toward actual perfection! No man can make commendable progress toward perfection in any direction who does not recognize his shortcomings. If we say we see, our blindness remains; if we say we are wise, our ignorance remains, and our folly is manifest to others while we glory in our shame. —Phil. 3:18, 19.

Such is the spirit of this world. It is blind to the highest interests and noblest ends of life; it intoxicates the mind and heart and sends the man staggering along the downward way to destruction, wise only in his own conceit. Against the intoxicating spirit of this world it is the duty of the Christian to set a vigilant guard. He has covenanted to live apart from the world with all its ambitions, pride and vainglory, and apart, too, from its selfishness, greed and strife. Let us, therefore, be sober and watch unto prayer; and let the burden of our prayer be: "Cleanse thou me from secret faults [show them to me, that I may put them far from me]. Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me." "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."—Psa. 19:12-14; 139:23, 24.

We need to know and clearly recognize our errors if we would indeed be cleansed from every secret fault. If there be any secret fault in us, what though no human eye might detect it, if we are indeed lovers of righteousness we will want the cleansing power of the Word applied to take it away, remembering always that "all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do."—Heb. 4:13.

Yes, it is in the diagnosis of our case that we are most likely to err and it is here that sobriety of mind and meekness are so much needed. Self-love does not like to admit the faults that are in us, to particularize them and look them squarely in the face with the searchlight of God's Word clearly revealing them. It is much more conducive to complacent ease of mind to generalize and to overlook particulars; —to say Yes, I know I am not perfect, etc., etc. But it requires a great deal more of moral courage to say, Yes, I see now, in the light of God's Word, that I have been selfish, or unkind, or unfaithful to my obligations, or whatever the fault may be. It requires meekness, humility, to admit these things, even to one's self; and still more, to confess them to those who have been injured or grieved by them. Yet how necessary are the recognition and the confession—the proper diagnosis of the case—to the healing. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another," says the Apostle James, "that ye may be healed." (Jas. 5:16) The recognition and the confession, as well as the prayer, are thus seen to be very important in order that the heart may be in the proper attitude to receive an answer to the prayer.

Careful reflection will show at once how necessary to the cure is a correct diagnosis. For instance, suppose a case of extreme selfishness. For a time it moves along and prospers, and the disease grows worse and worse until, by and by, some of its bitter fruits begin to appear. Now if the patient fails to discern or admit the selfishness, he may regard the bitter fruits of it, not as the penalty for wrong-doing, but as sufferings for righteousness' sake. And with this incorrect diagnosis he may come to the Word of God and take away the wrong remedy. If he should go at all, he will probably look for words of consolation designed for those only who are truly suffering for righteousness' sake. And that will not help his selfishness, but will make it worse: he will go on cultivating the selfishness and take comfort in the promises that are not his; whereas, if he realized and admitted the selfishness, he would be considering the warnings against it and praying for grace to overcome it; he would be acknowledging it to those concerned, and endeavoring to make amends for it; and in so doing its bitter fruits would begin to wither, the peace of God would come into his heart, his heart would enlarge, and the love of God and of his fellow-men would begin to fill it.

This is what it means to keep the Lord's commandments and to apply our hearts unto instruction. It means, not self-gratification, but self-abnegation, and self-purification: it means that, in meekness and humility, we must deny ourselves, and take up our cross daily, and follow Christ. This is the narrow way; walk ye in it. There is no other way to life, and certainly no other way to the Kingdom, than the way of righteousness, humility and true holiness, and of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whose abundant merit, applied by faith, will make up for all our deficiencies that are not wilful. It is those who walk this narrow way that may even now enjoy the sweets of fellowship with the Father and our Lord

merit of our robe we were begotten to the new mind, the new nature; and it will serve every purpose until such times as we shall have proved ourselves faithful as new creatures, and shall be permitted to pass from the probationary sonship to the enjoyment of the full measure of the Father's blessing and complete adoption into his family and nature. But there, at the moment of transition, when being received from the begotten and probationary stage of sonship into the everlasting state, it is eminently proper, and all that we would ask or desire, that every trace of the hitherto covered and forgiven sins and blemishes should be blotted out, and no longer need covering. And all this is a part of the divine provision for those who love God, "the [faithful] called ones according to his purpose." Then, it will be that that which is perfect having come, "that which is in part [our present standing graciously covered with Christ's imputed righteousness, covering our defects] will be done away."

"Oh, hail happy day!
That ends our tears and sorrows,
That brings us joy without alloy;
Oh, hail happy day!
No more by doubts and fears distressed,
We now shall gain our promised rest,
And be forever blest,
Oh, hail happy day!"

The tears and sorrows and battlings in strife against the world, the flesh and the devil are all very necessary in the present time; and we should neither hope nor expect to be crowned as victors, without passing through such experiences. In this battle, we learn not to think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think; we learn of our own weaknesses and imperfections and our need to walk closely with the Lord, if we would keep our garments unspotted from the world. We learn also to trust his grace, and that "our sufficiency is of God." We learn that "greater is he who is on our part than all they that be against us." We learn that the victory that overcometh the world is neither the strength and perfection of our flesh, nor merely the strong resolution of our minds, but the latter helped and strengthened by him who assures us that his strength can be perfected in our weakness. It is here that we learn that all things are working together for good to them that love God.

In this battle with the world, the flesh and the devil we learn also to appreciate the whole armor of God: the value of the "helmet of salvation," the intellectual appreciation of the divine plan and promises; the value of the "breastplate of righteousness," Christ's righteousness covering our most vital parts; the value of "the shield of faith," which is able to quench all the fiery darts of the adversary; and the invincible quality and sharpness of "the sword of the spirit, which is the Word of God"; and to put on the preparation of the gospel in a meek, patient and quiet spirit, which, as sandals, permits us to pass over the sharpest difficulties of life successfully. In this conflict we learn to cultivate the graces of the spirit, through many trials and temptations; which though for the time being are not pleasant but grievous, nevertheless work out for all who are rightly exercised thereby, "a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

The Apostle in our text declares that the blotting out of the church's sins shall be in connection with "times of refreshing" or spirit outpouring, at the second advent of our Lord. How consistent this is with reason, and with all the facts of the case: it was after our Lord Jesus had bought us with his precious blood that the heavenly Father granted to his church a great blessing, a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, at Pentecost, as marking his approval of all covered by the "wedding garment," and as a foretaste of his greater blessing, to be bestowed when her trial would be complete, and the sins actually blotted out. That season of Pentecostal refreshing from the divine presence, under the blessed influence of which Peter was preaching when he used the words of our text, was only an earnest or hand-payment of the great perfect refreshment and spirit-energizing that will come to the Lord's people at the farther end of the narrow way, when the Bridegroom shall come to receive to his nature and his throne and to confess her before his Father and the holy angels. As the Apostle intimates in our text, the very first work then will be the complete blotting out of the church's sins, in the first resurrection.

And immediately following this perfecting of the church will come a work for the world—"times of restitution of all things which God hath spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began." This signifies a similar blessing (blotting out of sins) upon all the world of mankind, who shall then, after being brought to a knowledge of the truth, obediently accept the divine mercy under the terms of the New Covenant. Since man as originally created was in the moral likeness of his Creator, but has lost that likeness by the blemishes of sin, restitution to the likeness lost would signify the blotting out of those blemishes wrought by sin. But there will be a great difference between the blotting out of the sins of the obedient, overcoming church and the blotting out of the sins of the obedient ones of the world. The church's sins will be instantly blotted out in the moment of the resurrection; the world's sins will be gradually blotted out during the period of Christ's reign—during the Millennium. The terms and conditions will be different also. While the church has her sins and imperfections covered during the period of her trial, and does not have her efforts to overcome the weaknesses of the flesh rewarded by physical restitution, but is rewarded instantaneously at the end of her race, according to her faith and her endeavors to conquer, the obedient of the world, in the next age, will, on the contrary, have their sins blotted out, not as the reward of faith and effort merely; but as the reward of successful and continuous effort, which will then be possible, and be rewarded step by step with restitution blessings or the gradual blotting out of sins.

Describing the judgment (trial) of the world during the Millennial age, our Lord shows that all will then be "judged according to their works"—not according to their faith, as the church is now being judged. (Rev. 20:12, 13:1; 1 Jno. 5:4) Faith, which is now difficult and therefore highly rewarded, will by and by, when the mists have rolled away, be the most easy and only reasonable thing; and while it will be required, being easy it will not be specially rewarded as now. And perfect works, which under present conditions are impossible with all our efforts, because of our blemished bodies, will then be the standard for which and toward which all who attain to everlasting life will be required to labor, building up character in breaking off evil propensities and in bringing themselves into full accord with righteousness in thought, word and deed. And under the favorable conditions of that time, a restitutionary blessing will be present to reward every effort, not only with an upbuilding of moral character and willpower, but also with proportionate strength and upbuilding of the mental and physical powers.

Thus, item by item and step by step, throughout the Millennial age, the worthy ones of the world will be helped out of their weakness and imperfections, back to the perfection originally lost by the disobedience of father Adam, the right to return to which (by the cancellation of Adam's sentence) was secured by the ransom-price given by our Redeemer. And since every victory over self and sin and imperfection will be promptly rewarded, it will be rightly seen that the blotting out of the world's sins will gradually progress little by little, until at the close of the Millennial age, all who have been willing to hear and obey the voice of the Great Prophet (Head and body), will have attained to an unblemished perfection, mental physical and moral, with none of the blemishes of sin remaining.

Mankind, as originally created, as represented in father Adam before his transgression, was in the image of God: the mind, the will, the judgment were true copies of the Lord's; and thus it might properly be said that Adam had the law of God written in his heart, in his head, in his very organization. But, this divine likeness has been marred, ruined by the fall. Man's organization, mental and moral, can no longer be said to be in the image of God. The selfish qualities have grown at the expense of the moral and intellectual qualities, so that he is very unlike his Creator, and his own original, as represented in Adam. But God's promise is that when he begins to deal with the world under the New Covenant in the hands of the great Mediator, a great work will be accomplished for all the families of the earth who will obey him through the then exalted seed of Abraham; until all shall be blessed and be permitted to become God's people—"Israelites indeed," children of Abraham through faith—multitudinous as the sands of the sea.

Then will be fulfilled the promise of the Lord (Jer. 31: 29-34), that they who die will die for their own iniquity, and not as now, for Adam's iniquity. And under the conditions of the New Covenant, the great Mediator of that covenant will re-write the law of God in the hearts of the repentant ones, as it originally was in the heart and very organism of Adam before his transgression: as it is written, "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people." This promise does not apply to the present time, but indicates the completed results of the Millennial work, when the willing and obedient of mankind shall have been brought to perfection; all their iniquities and sins being blotted out. This is shown by the context, which says, "They shall teach no more every man his

neighbor and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord'; for they shall all know him, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sins no more."

This blotting out of sins for the world during the Millennial Age will begin with Israel according to the flesh; "to the Jew, first." So the Apostle informs us in so many words. Read Romans 11:25-29. As spiritual Israel is the first-fruits of all God's creatures, the first to enter into the fullness of his blessing and be recovered from death, so natural Israel is to constitute the first-fruits of the nations to be saved from the blinding influences of the adversary, and to be granted a blessing under the New Covenant.

But, the blessing which begins with the return of fleshly Israel to divine favor, will not end with them; for as the casting away of Israel under divine providence resulted in the bringing in of some from amongst the Gentiles to be joint-heirs in the Abrahamic promise and covenant, so the blessing of Israel under the New Covenant means, not only an opportunity of life from the dead to them, but also a similar blessing of opportunity for all the families of the earth; because it is through the seed of Abraham (first the spiritual, secondly, the natural) that all the families of the earth are to be blessed with an opportunity of becoming children of Abraham, who is the "father" of all who are faithful to God. Thus, eventually, there shall none remain except the seed of Abraham, first the spiritual seed as the stars of heaven, and secondly, the earthly seed, as the sands of the seashore, all partakers of father Abraham's faith and obedience. See Romans 11:12, 15.

The original perfection of mankind (father Adam) and the fall were symbolically represented in the first tables of the law which God himself prepared and wrote, but which were broken, because of sin; they also represented the Law Covenant, and how it was a failure, broken so far as the people of Israel were concerned. The hewing out of the new tables of stone, whereon to rewrite the law of God, symbolized the preparation of mankind, through the justification accomplished by the sacrifice of Christ. And not only was the preparation of the second tablets the work of Moses (type of Christ, Head and body), but also the second writing of the law on those tables was the work of Moses and typified the work of Christ (Head and body) during the Millennial age—the engraving of the law of God in the very hearts and constitutions of all of mankind, willing to submit to his ways.

"I WILL COME AGAIN AND RECEIVE YOU"

AUGUST 8.—1 THESS. 4:9; 5:2.

While our lesson deals chiefly with the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is introduced with a description of the class who will rejoice in his second coming, and with good reason. The Apostle (vs. 9-12) points out some of the true characteristics of those to whom he elsewhere says, "Ye, brethren, are not in darkness that that day should overtake you as a thief; ye are all children of the light, and children of the day."

An essential of Christian character is "the love of God," "the love of Christ," extending to all the household of faith possessed of his Spirit; and a spirit of sympathy toward the entire "groaning creation."

Although the church at Thessalonica was composed of those who in respect to length of Christian experience were but "babes in Christ," yet very evidently the persecution which had come upon them had caused them to grow very rapidly. It was but a year since they had received the gospel, and yet the Apostle witnesses to their rapid development, as evidenced by their love one for the other; and not only love for the company at Thessalonica, but the breadth of their love extending to and manifesting an interest in all of the household of faith throughout the Province of Macedonia. The Apostle declares that his love of the brethren was a manifestation of the fact that they had been "taught of God." This reminds us of the statement of another Apostle, "He that loveth not his brother, whom he hath seen, how can he love God, whom he hath not seen."

One of the first effects of a knowledge of the grace of God in Christ, and of a full, thorough consecration to the Lord, is this love for all fellow-servants—"brethren." Would that the fervency and zeal of first love, both toward the Lord and toward the entire household of faith, might not only continue, but increase with all. But alas! many who start warmly and earnestly grow lukewarm—become captious, cynical, hypercritical, high-minded and self-assertive—and lose much of the simplicity, zeal and humility of their first faith and first love. This is the first attack of the great adversary through the weaknesses of the flesh, to re-ensnare those who have escaped his chains of darkness, and gotten to see some of the glory of God shining through Christ. If they do not resist these temptations, the effect is sure to be not only lukewarmness toward the Lord and his cause and the members of his body, but eventually the cultivation of the fruits of darkness, envy, malice, hatred, strife, instead of the fruits of the spirit of Christ, meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly love and kindness. Hence, the Apostle urges the church, "We beseech you, brethren, that ye increase more and more," in love and service one for the other, which imply a growth in all the graces of the spirit.

The expression "that ye study to be quiet" might be rendered literally "that ye be ambitious to be quiet," or that ye have a quiet ambition—not a restless bustling for notoriety and great exploits, but a quiet earnest perseverance in well-doing; in which condition the fruits and graces of the spirit thrive best. They were to be ambitious also to attend to their own affairs, and to work with their own hands: home and family duties were not to be neglected. The religion of Christ is designed to enter into and blend with all the proper duties, perplexities, trials and pleasures of the home and family; and thus the majority can best let shine the light which they have received from the Lord. We are indeed "living epistles."

True, the light received will make a great change in many of the affairs of the home. It sets before us new ideals to be esteemed and to be copied. It introduces us to a new relationship, a new kindred—the family of God—and thus brings some new responsibilities and privileges. And if filled with the spirit of the truth, with love toward God and all who have any of his likeness, it will make us very zealous in the dispensing of the grace of God, which has brought so much blessing to our own hearts. But, we should not consider it necessarily the Lord's will that we all should go forth as public teachers, abandoning entirely our homes, trades, duties, responsibilities, etc.

The Lord's call will never conflict with proper duties and responsibilities previously upon us. The man or the woman who has a family to provide for should not think of leaving such obligations, nor consider himself called to public preaching, if it would imply the neglect of duties and obligations already resting upon him. He or she, however, should quietly and thankfully be ambitious to do all in the divine service that a proper regard for others dependent upon them would permit. On the other hand, those who are free to give time and energy to the Lord's service, and who have talents, should when they receive the truth, humbly present their all to the Lord and seek to use their every opportunity in his service as he shall open the way; and such consecrated ones should be very careful that they do not encumber themselves so as to hinder usefulness in such service.

Not only have we duties and a ministry toward every member of the body of Christ, but (v. 12) we have certain responsibilities toward those who are without—in darkness, out of Christ. The Christian is to be a burning and shining light toward the world. The world sees not from the inside, as does the household of faith, but merely from the outside; hence the necessity that Christians should so live before the world as to be "living epistles, known and read of all men," honoring to the Lord and to the teachings of his Word. The Apostle's statement really is "walk honorably toward them that are without." The Christian life should be seen by the world, not merely as just and honest, but also as noble and honorable. There are honest people who are mean, truthful people who tell the truth in a combative and repellant manner; in the true Christian, love should produce so generous a sentiment as would ennoble every virtue. In other words, as the same Apostle expressed it, "He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity (without ostentation)"; "he that ruleth, with diligence"; "he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness," etc., Rom. 12:7-20.

To this end, also, the Christian should strive "to have need of nothing"—So far as possible not to be dependent upon charity—but, rather, as the Apostle elsewhere states it, in harmony with the foregoing, he should "labor, working with his hands at useful employment [not to accumulate great wealth, but] that he may have to give to him that needeth." (Eph. 4:28) The Lord's instruction to fleshly Israel that they should lend, but should not borrow, may well be applied in principle by spiritual Israel. And this principle applies to buying on credit; which should be avoided by the

Lord's people, and as a rule would be found advantageous to mankind in general.

"THEM THAT SLEEP IN JESUS"

Having given us some general idea respecting the brethren, their general character, etc., the Apostle proceeds to speak of their hopes. Under the Apostle's instruction, supplemented by Timothy's, the church at Thessalonica had in a very short time attained a considerable knowledge of the divine plan; much more apparently than is enjoyed by a majority of Christian congregations today. For instance, (1) They knew what many today are ignorant of, that their hope centered in the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, and their being gathered to him then. (2) They knew that their friends who had died were "asleep," and their hope was that they would be awakened from the sleep of death by the Lord at his second coming. Realizing that all hopes of eternal life depended upon the second coming of the Lord as the great Life-giver, there was no danger that the early church should ever lose sight of this inspiring hope set before us in the Gospel. And it is because this fact (that the dead "sleep" and cannot be awakened until the second advent) has been lost sight of for several centuries past, that faith in and hope for the Lord's second coming has so generally languished. It has come to be generally believed by Christian people that the dead do not "sleep," but are more awake than they ever were —that they go to heaven or to hell in the moment of dissolution; and that these conditions are permanent, unalterable. With such unscriptural thoughts before their minds, who can wonder that to them the second coming of the Lord is an event without special interest; and hence regarded lightly, and by many wholly disbelieved, and declared to be a useless, uninteresting and pernicious faith.

However, "the brethren," who have been instructed by the Word of the Lord, and who do not follow "cunningly devised fables" originated by the deceiver, find that the Scriptures as a whole from Genesis to Revelation are illuminated with the grand hope of the coming of the Messiah in glory and power, to establish his kingdom of righteousness in the earth, and to awaken and lift up those who have fallen under the hand of death; to give beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy for the spirit of heaviness—to as many as will accept his blessing, under the terms of the New Covenant sealed at Calvary with his own precious blood.

The penalty against our race, as originally pronounced, was not a sleep of death, for a few days or for a few centuries; on the contrary, it was absolute death—destruction. But God had purposed a redemption from the curse of death, and for this purpose Christ Jesus came into the world and died, the just one for the unjust, that he might bring us to God—back to divine favor, where the gift of God, eternal life, will be a possibility to the obedient. Ever since the ransom-price was paid at Calvary, and its acceptance manifested at Pentecost, it has been proper to regard the whole world as being no longer dead—wholly cut off from life—but as merely sleeping—waiting for the return of the Redeemer as the Awakener, Vivifier, Life-giver.

In this sense of the word, all mankind, redeemed by the precious blood, may be said to "sleep in Jesus"; because, by his death Jesus bought the world, and secured for all another trial for life (instead of the one lost by father Adam through disobedience). And Jesus himself declared that as a consequence of his being lifted up as the great sin-offering upon the cross, he will yet "draw" all men unto him.—thus showing that the world is not to be considered as dead, extinct, but as merely "asleep," waiting for the drawing time foreordained of the Father, and provided for by the ransom for all. This drawing, like the drawing exerted for the selection of the church, will be through a knowledge of the truth, and signifies that all mankind will ultimately be made aware of God's gracious provision, under which if they will (when brought to a knowledge of the truth), they may obtain life everlasting. Since the majority of mankind went into death before the ransom was paid, this implies an awakening from death in order that they may be drawn or come to a knowledge of the truth. In harmony with this are the words of our Lord, that the hour is coming when all that are in the graves shall hear his voice and come forth; and then they that hear (obey) shall live (everlastingly).

All have been redeemed by Jesus, who "gave his life a ransom for all"; and the fact that their death-sentence has been met, paid by the Redeemer, makes it proper that they may now be spoken of as "asleep in Jesus," instead of as being dead in Adam. The fact that many of them did not know of their redemption would work no greater hindrance than the fact that many of the same ones had no knowledge in particular of the original sentence through Adam—they came under Adamic sentence without choice or knowledge, and latterly came under the benefits of the redemption similarly without choice or knowledge—Rom. 5:18.

That the Apostle in this connection in the use of the words "them also which sleep in Jesus," does not refer merely to the saints is very evident, when we remember that the Gospel had only been preached at Thessalonica for one year, and that in that year not very many of the saints could have died. When we remember further that the saints are not very generally related, according to the flesh, we can readily see that in appealing to their hopes that they should sorrow not as others, the Apostle must have meant not only hopes for the saints, but also hopes for all of their friends who died—including those who had previously died. If their hopes were merely for the saints, and if they believed that all others were hopelessly and everlastingly lost, it would be in vain that the Apostle would appeal to them not to sorrow as others who have no hope; for such bad hopes respecting the great majority of their dying and dead friends and relatives would be a cause for more sorrow than they or any other heathens could have had when they had no knowledge, and no definite hopes.

This is set forth by the Apostle (v. 14): he points out that our faith is built upon the fact, (1) that Christ died; and (2) that he rose again. He died for our sins, "and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2). His resurrection is an evidence that his sacrifice was acceptable on behalf not only of his church, but also on behalf of all for whom he died; and it becomes a guarantee or pledge, not only of God's gracious proposition, that he will in his own due time establish Christ and his church as his kingdom, but a guarantee, also, of the further promise that Christ's kingdom when established shall "bless all the families of the earth," with "the knowledge of the truth." Believing this, we are bound to believe also that all who were redeemed by his precious blood shall, according to his promise, yet come forth from the sleep of death to hear his Word as the great Law-giver of the new dispensation; and by obedience to it, under the New Covenant, sealed by the precious blood, to have if they will the gift of God, eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. (See Acts 3:22, 23) As God accepted the sacrifice of Christ and raised him from the dead, even so, them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring [from the sleep of death] with him—through his instrumentality.

But let us not confound this thought of the future of the whole world being changed from "death" to "sleep" by the ransom which Jesus gave for all, with the very different expression "new creatures in Christ," and "the dead in Christ," expressions which are applicable to the elect church only.

IN JESUS VS. IN CHRIST

Many will notice at a glance that the name Jesus, which signifies Saviour, has special applicability to the ransom and restitution features of our Lord's work, while the name Christ is the title of his kingly office. The call to "be baptized into Jesus Christ," to thus become "members of the body of Christ" (the anointed) is an offer which is restricted to the "called and chosen and faithful," "elect" church of this Gospel age; but the redemptive benefits covered by the name Jesus are "for all," for "every man," for "whosoever will" accept those mercies on New Covenant conditions.

So, then, in the language of the Apostle, we exhort Christians that in respect to all their dead, in Christ and out of Christ—new creatures and old creatures, those enlightened and blessed by the marvelous light of the Gospel, and those who have died while yet blinded to the truth by "the god of this world," that they sorrow not as others who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died for all, and that he has risen, and that all the dead on this account are to be reckoned as sleeping, waiting for his return and his exaltation with his elect bride in glory; and that then all whom God counts as asleep in or on account of or through him and his work, shall be also brought from the dead.

And few have noticed the frequency with which the Scriptures use this word "sleep." Notice that it is used three times in three successive verses in this lesson. Notice also the following instances: Jno. 11:11, 12; Acts 7:60; 13:13, 36; 2 Peter 3:4; 1 Cor. 15:6, 13-18, 20, 51; Matt. 9:24; 13:25; 25:5; Mark 5:39; Luke 8:52; 1 Thess. 5:10; Matt. 27:52; 1 Cor. 11:30.

These instances of the use of the word sleep, instead of the word death, are all from the New Testament, and used in full view of the ransom by which all were redeemed from the Adamic sentence, and a majority of them after the sacrifice had been given. What was the custom previously? Looking back we find Daniel (12:1-3) prophetically speaking of those who "sleep in the dust of the earth," and describing

the sleepers as of two classes—some who will awake to everlasting life, and some to shame—the latter representing those whose trial will take place during the Millennium. And similarly of the kings and prophets one after another, good and bad, it is declared he "slept with his fathers."

The basis for this expression and of the faith in a future life which it implied is explained by our Lord saying, "That the dead are [to be] raised, even Moses showed at the bush" (Luke 20:37). "Have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob" (Mark 12:26). "He is not a God of the dead [the extinct, for whom no future is designed] but [he is the God] of the living, because all live unto him" (Luke 20:38). It was as a result of this lesson the Jews thereafter spoke of their dead as "asleep," and "waiting for the morning" to be "awakened." And, be it noticed, God's grounds for speaking of humanity as yet having a hope of life beyond the grave, rests not upon any change of the sentence from death (extinction) to a profound "sleep" for a period, but upon his predetermined plan to provide a Saviour who would redeem or purchase back for Adam and all his race "that which was lost" of privilege of life everlasting in harmony with God.

THE HOPE OF THE WORLD

If, then, sentence of death which came upon all men by Adam's transgression is changed to a sleep, through whom came the change? We answer, It is in or through Jesus that they may now be said to sleep; because his sacrifice is the ground for the expression "sleep."

Having spoken of the general hopes of the entire "groaning creation" which all centre in the second coming of our Lord, the Apostle delivers, not an opinion or a guess, but a special message, to the effect that the sleeping saints will suffer no less by reason of having fallen asleep, but that, on the contrary, they will be granted a priority over the living saints, in that they will be "changed," "glorified," be like and see the Lord, and share his glory, before those of the same class who are alive at that time. Elsewhere we have given at considerable length our reasons for believing that the shout, the voice and the trumpet here mentioned by the Apostle are symbols, as in other parts of the Scriptures—for instance, the shouts, voices and trumpets of Revelation, connected with the same topic. See Millennial Dawn, Vol. II., chapter V., particularly pages 143-150.

It would appear that the church at Thessalonica had been studying this subject of the Lord's second coming, and were fearful lest some of them might "fall asleep" before his coming, and were doubtful as to how much of the blessing might thus be lost by them, as well as solicitous for their friends, hence the Apostle says, "Comfort one another" with these words.

We here notice that the word coming in verse fifteen is in the Greek parousia, which really does not have the significance of our English word "coming," but instead signifies presence —after arrival—giving the thought that the Lord will be present before the dead in Christ are "raised," although that will be prior to the "change" of the living. This, as well as many other Scriptures, indicate distinctly that the Lord's presence will not be manifest, visible, to the world during this time; as our Lord said before he went away, "Yet a little while and the world seeth me no more." This thought is emphasized by the Apostle's subsequent remarks respecting the day of the Lord, and the fact that the world would not know of it, but only the "brethren" who were "not in darkness."

It speaks well for the rapid growth in knowledge on the part of the church at Thessalonica that the Apostle could say to them, "Of the times and seasons, brethren, you have no need that I write unto you: for yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night; and when they [the world, unbelievers] shall say, Peace and safety! then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape; but, "ye brethren, are not in darkness that that day shall overtake you as a thief." How definitely the Apostle here separates the body of Christ, the church, from the world; and how particularly he shows that the one class may, will, must have knowledge on this subject, while the other class must be in ignorance on the same subject. And that subject is a knowledge of the day of the Lord—the day of the Lord's presence—"the harvest" or end of this age, in which the great Chief Reaper will not only gather the sleeping ones first, but proceed also to seal and to gather all the living ones of the elect class, who shall be accounted worthy to escape the great things that are about to come upon the world, in the great time of trouble which will dissolve present institutions and make ready for the establishment of Christ and his little flock of joint-heirs, as the heavenly kingdom.

SELF-DENIAL IN THE INTEREST OF OTHERS

AUGUST 15.—1 COR. 8:1-13.

God's Word, both of the Old and New Testaments, has been, and yet is, the very cornerstone of human liberty and independence. Every other system of religion has tended more or less to fetter the mind and the conscience with priestcraft and superstition. And the various so-called Christian religions, from Roman and Greek Catholicisms down, have likewise tended toward priestcraft, superstition and conscience-bondage, in proportion as they have ignored the teachings of God's Word, substituting therefor the "traditions of the elders," Decrees of Councils, theological dogmas, etc. As we look over the world today, it is an unquestionable fact that the largest liberty, social, political and mental is possessed by the peoples who have the Bible, and who read it freely. And the largest Christian liberty amongst these is enjoyed by those who study it with the greatest candor and simplicity.

But if this knowledge and liberty be not accompanied by a full self-surrender to God, a complete consecration of one's self to him who is the Author of our liberties and privileges, we stand in great danger; for, as the apostle here declares, knowledge alone without self-submission to God would incline to puff us up, to make us heady, arrogant, self-sufficient. But if the knowledge be accompanied by a love to God, which leads to self-consecration in his service, in harmony with his instructions, the knowledge will work good for us, by thus introducing the spirit of love as the controlling factor in our lives, because the effect of love is to "build up" instead of to "puff up." Love is constructive, and tends not only to build up our own characters after the divine pattern, but by so doing it makes us co-workers together with God, in our sympathies for and interest in others—in their upbuilding and general welfare.

After making this point clear, the apostle proceeds to apply it to the Christians at Corinth. As in all other cities of the Gentiles at that time, there were plenty of idols, plenty of gods, and plenty of temples; and it was the custom to eat consecrated food—meat that had been offered before an idol. The Apostle assures his readers that he fully agrees with their knowledge and logic upon this subject; to the effect that since the idol is not a god, therefore the offering of meat to it could not in any manner injure the meat to those who really understood the matter. Their increase of knowledge had given them a liberty which they could not have appreciated at first; but he urges that as Christians it is our duty to consider not merely our own liberties, but in such cases to waive our liberties in the interest of others, upon whom the influence might be injurious. We should, therefore, be very careful in the use of our knowledge and liberties, to see that it worked no injury to others—or otherwise to abstain from such liberties as might be injurious to others.

Every one knows how easy it is to meddle with the delicate machinery of a watch, and thus to render it absolutely useless. So the conscience is a delicate mechanism, and we should be on guard against any and every influence which might injure either our own conscience or the consciences of others. The Corinthian brethren who fully understood that an idol was nothing, and that an idol temple was therefore nothing, might be fully at ease in their own consciences, if as guests they attended a municipal feast or banquet in such an idol temple; they might be able even there to recognize the true God and to eat and drink with thankfulness to him; but there might be onlookers, or amongst them, other brethren with knowledge less clear upon these subjects, who, nevertheless, would want to follow their example, and who in so doing would be violating and injuring their consciences. And no one could know what serious results might come from such a violation of conscience; the conscience which submitted to violation reluctantly at first, would incline to become hardened, and finally would cease to speak at all. And the owner of that conscience would be likely to drift according to the inclinations of his fallen nature into the very worst extremes of depravity. For this reason those who have knowledge of the divine Word and the liberties wherewith Christ makes free, need more than ever an increase of the divine spirit—charity, love—which would make them careful that their every act would not only be in harmony with their own consciences, but such, also, as would not prove stumbling blocks to the

consciences of others, whose knowledge or logic could grasp the situation less clearly.

To fail to have this love and this active, self-sacrificing consideration for the welfare and conscience of a weaker brother, the Apostle declares would not only be a sin against the brethren and wound their consciences, but a sin also against Christ—against the very spirit of his law of love one for the other. How nobly the Apostle sums this matter up when he declares that as for himself, if he found it necessary, in order that he might be a help to the brethren, and not a stumbling block to any, he would take pleasure in denying himself, not only the meat offered to idols, but all meat of every kind, as long as he lived. Paul thus manifested the true spirit of brotherly love; and every follower of the Lord Jesus Christ should seek to have this same spirit and sentiment active in all their intercourse with each other.

While there is nothing in this lesson directly bearing upon intoxicating liquors, the principle inculcated can be very properly applied to the great evil of intemperance which is doing so much injury to the whole world, and in some cases even to those who have named the name of Christ. We do not dispute the principle of liberty, that each Christian has a right to decide the right and wrong of such matters according to his own conscience, but we do offset this knowledge and liberty with the doctrine of love, as the Apostle does in this lesson. Whoever is a child of the King, not only has liberty, but must also have the spirit of love; and he who boasts the liberty and manifests nothing of the spirit of love and consideration for others, raises the question whether he is a bastard or a son; for if any man have not the spirit of Christ (love), he is none of his.

The Christian whose heart is full of the Lord's spirit of love will not only be careful that he may set a good example before the brethren, lest they should be stumbled, but he will also be careful of the example which he sets to his own sons and household, and to all "them who are without"—those who have not yet accepted the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, but who are reading the lives and characters of his disciples, as living epistles of his doctrines.

Incidentally our lesson brings before us a very clear and positive statement respecting God. While the world has many that it calls gods and lords and masters, to the Christian, as the Apostle expresses it, "There is but one God, the Father." The Apostle evidently knew nothing of the doctrine, started in the second century, and patterned after the heathen ideas, to the effect that there are three gods, of whom the catechisms declare that they are "equal in power and in glory." The Apostle knew of only one God who was supreme, "the Father." And he declares that of him (proceeding from him, directly or indirectly) are all things, including ourselves.

But, the Apostle by no means ignored our Lord Jesus Christ, who claimed to be not "the Father," but "the Son of God." Of him the Apostle has elsewhere said after telling us how he humbled himself for our sakes, leaving the glory of the Father's presence in obedience to the Father's will and plan, and how he suffered for us, the just for the unjust, death itself, even the death of the cross," then adds, "Him hath God highly exalted, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, both of things in heaven and things on earth, to the glory of God, the Father"—and that all men "should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father." Nor does the Apostle here omit to mention Jesus, but says, that to us there is "one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."—Phil. 2:8-11; John 5:23.

How clearly and how simply the Apostle states the relationship existing between the glorified Father, the glorified Son, and all the creation of God, which is or will be blessed through the Son. Although, all things are of the Father, in the sense that the original power, life, etc., proceeded from the Father, nevertheless all things are by the Son, in the sense that he from the very beginning has been the Father's active and honored agent in every feature of the divine plan. Himself declared to be "the beginning of the creation of God," it is also declared that "all things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made" (though of the Father, by the Father's power, etc.). See Rev. 3:14; Jno. 1:2, 3; also our issue for June, '92, and April 15, '93.

THE PILGRIM

Wild shrieks the wind, how rough's the way!
But, see, one star's alight!
Up! let us follow, where its ray
Strikes through the shuddering night
O'er yonder roof, serene and clear.
And hark! what music is't we hear?

My heart scarce beats, my steps are slow,
Almost I faint and die:
Sick, worn, benumbed amidst the snow,
Ah! what a pilgrim I!
Yet will I follow stagg'ring on,
Ere light and music both be gone.

For One waits there, the only one,
Who knows my heart and me;
All that I am, all I have done,
All I may chance to be:
Who will not spurn the piteous thing,
The sole, best offering I can bring:

Who will not chide me, poor and late,
Nor scorn my sorry wit;
Who will not fling me to my fate—
O God, the thought of it!
Once that I look in those dear eyes,
What virtues shall my soul surprise!

Then up, my heart, gather thy strength
A little longer! See,
Almost our journeying ends; at length
Almost at home are we:
Sheltered, my heart, from storm and night
In that Friend's house of sure delight!

—*Selwyn Image.*

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VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

Two thousand carrier-pigeons collected from various parts of Germany by the German government, sent to Dover, England, and there set free to see how many of them could be relied on to return quickly to their homes, is but a trifling incident of itself; but it has created a great commotion in England. It is interpreted to indicate that the German Emperor is considering the possibilities of a war with Great Britain; and desires to know how he could keep in communication with his army after it had landed on British soil, supposing that the telegraph cables would be destroyed or under British control. The matter was taken up in Parliament, but it was decided that the affront was of so peculiar a character that no notice could be taken officially by the Government.

In our opinion it is one of Emperor William's strategic bluffs, by which he is pleased frequently to startle the world, and keep himself in notice as a central figure—the arbiter of peace or war. It is an offset to the "Jubilee" show by Britain of a war fleet greater than that of all other European nations combined. It perhaps merely suggests,—"Britishers, when thinking of your naval strength, remember that others have greater army-strength."

But it nevertheless indicates the love of the grandson Emperor for his grandmother Queen; and indicates that the present-day inclination to peace on the part of the so-called Christian nations and rulers, springs not generally from any change of hearts or renewal of right spirits within the rulers or the masses, but from changed conditions which make results extra hazardous, as well as very expensive.

Theoretically both grandson and grandmother *reign "by the grace of God;" i. e.*, they claim to hold power not from the peoples whom they govern, but as rulers divinely commissioned and set over the people, as representatives of the kingdom of Heaven: and similarly all the kings and emperors of Europe claim. Yet, in the light of these false claims, how absurd are propositions of war like the above, and all the unholy wars the accounts of which cover the pages of "Christendom's" history.

* * *

An English journal, *The Morning Star*, is responsible for the report that Queen Victoria recently said to a minister of the Church of England, "I am looking for the coming of our Lord, and I do not think it impossible that I may not have

to surrender my crown till I shall lay it down at his feet."

It is pleasant to be assured that one of the potentates of earth is looking for the heavenly King and his kingdom of righteousness, even though her words imply that she sees the subject comparatively obscurely. Only his special "friends" know that the great King is already present, is assuming his great power and is about to use it as a rod of iron in dashing to pieces the human systems of church and state which falsely, and often ignorantly, call themselves by his name,—Christian governments and churches. Only these realize that the judgment of these man-made systems is now in progress. Only these have been served by the Master through his instrumentalities with the "meat in due season" for the household of faith. (Luke 12:37) Only these know how to interpret the growing confusion and darkness coming upon the nominal churches, and the foreboding "clouds" of trouble causing distress of nations with perplexity, and making men's hearts to fail them for fear in looking forward to the things coming upon the earth. Only these are able to see through these events to the blessings they presage, to the church first, and to all the families of the earth later on. Only these therefore are able to lift up their heads and rejoice, knowing that their redemption draweth nigh.

* * *

Many odes and poems were written in commemoration of the Queen's Jubilee; but one of the last, and less boastful than many, seems to meet with general appreciation. It is styled "Recessional," as indicating thoughts on the conclusion of the Jubilee, and has just been published. It is as follows:—

JUBILEE RECESSIONAL

"God of our fathers, known of old—
Lord of our far-flung battle-line—
Beneath whose awful hand we hold
Dominion over palm and pine—
Lord God of Hosts be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

"The tumult and the shouting dies—
The captains and the kings depart—
Still stands Thine ancient Sacrifice,
An humble and a contrite heart.
Lord God of Hosts be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

"Far-called our navies melt away—
On dune and headland sinks the fire—
Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
Judge of the nations, spare us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

"If, drunk with sight of power, we loose
Wild tongues that have not Thee in awe—
Such boasting as the Gentiles use
Or lesser breeds without the Law—
Lord God of Hosts be with us yet,
Lest we forget—lest we forget!

"For heathen heart that puts her trust
In reeking tube and iron shard—
All valiant dust that builds on dust,
And guarding calls not Thee to guard—
For frantic boast and foolish word.
Thy mercy on Thy people, Lord! Amen.

—*Rudyard Kipling.*"

JEWISH INVESTIGATION

"A curious movement is on foot among the Jews in one or two of the provinces of South Russia, which may result in an important religious revival. A number of pious Israelites are establishing associations for the reading and study of the Scriptures, both in the homes of the people and in their public assemblies. Much attention will be devoted to the prophetical books of the Old Testament, and to investigating the claims of Christians that Jesus of Nazareth has in his life and work and death been the fulfiller of many utterances of the prophets which have for so long been stumbling blocks to the Jews. It is further reported from Russia that a deeper religious feeling than has hitherto characterized them is noticed among the Karaim Jews of the Crimea. This sect of Israelites reject the Talmud as in any sense binding on them, their only sacred scriptures being the Old Testament. They are only found in the Crimea and in one or two isolated districts in Western Russia."—*The Independent.*

This is a favorable indication. The Talmud stands between the Jew and God's Word just as the creeds and decrees of Synods and councils stand between Christians and the Word. Nothing must be allowed to separate between us and the inspired Word if we would walk in the light. Whatever "helps" really point us to the Bible as the only authority, and assist us in rightly dividing it, are profitable to us as servants and guides: but that which attempts to be to us *instead* of God's Word is a dangerous foe.

ZEAL THE MEASURE OF LOVE

"There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? Simon answered and said, I suppose that he to whom he forgave most. And Jesus said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged." —Luke 7:41-43.

The peculiar circumstances which drew forth the above colloquy will be very generally remembered. It was toward the close of our Lord's ministry, and a prominent Pharisee had invited him to dine with him and a company of friends; and while they reclined at dinner, after the custom of those times, —the table being spread in the centre and couches surrounding it on which the guests rested upon one elbow, while their feet extended out behind the couches—there came behind the Lord a woman, Mary Magdalene, widely known as a disreputable character; she was in deep contrition and was weeping, her tears falling copiously upon the Master's feet. She had with her an alabaster box of very expensive ointment, and as she prepared to anoint our Lord's feet with it she first wiped them with her hair. Such a scene probably never occurred before or since, and was well calculated to move even the hardest hearts. But, so far from entering into the real spirit of the situation, the Pharisees were of cynical mind and merely interpreted this as a proof that our Lord was not a prophet: arguing that, if he were, he would have known the character of the woman, for she "was a sinner." Our Lord, discerning their hearts, gave them a better explanation of the case in the language of our text.

We are not to understand from our Lord's illustration that Mary was ten times as guilty before the divine law as was Simon, the Pharisee, but rather that in this illustration our Lord pictured the sentiments of the two sinners. Really "there is none righteous, no, not one;" "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God;" both Simon and Mary were under the Law of Moses, according to which he who was guilty of violating one feature of the law had broken the law as a whole; and had therefore failed of the reward promised to the one who would keep the whole, and had incurred the penalty pronounced for the violation of the whole,—death. Strictly speaking, then, both Simon and Mary owed the same amount—the lives of both were forfeited because of sin: and if either one of them were ever to obtain eternal life it could be only by the mercy of God, in the forgiveness of their sins. Strictly speaking, then, they each owed five hundred pence (were under sentence of death), and were alike unable to meet their indebtednesses.

Our Lord put the illustration of ten to one, not as representing his view of the situation, but as illustrating the sentiments of Mary and Simon. Mary realized her unworthiness, and in this respect was like the publican mentioned in one of our Lord's previous illustrations, who smote upon his breast, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner;"—she realized her sinful load and how much need she had of the Lord's mercy in its removal. But Simon was like the other character of our Lord's discourse, who thanked God that he was not like other men, but that if not entirely perfect in every particular he was at least very nearly perfect. Alas! those who are in this condition of mind are farther from the Lord than the truly humble and penitent who realize their need of a Saviour, even though as respects many moralities they may be humanly on a higher plane. So in this case, while the Saviour was present and Simon might have had a great blessing, it was penitent Mary who really received it. She heard the Master's words, "Thy sins are forgiven," while Simon who appreciated his unworthiness but slightly got no forgiveness. Here we have an illustration of our Lord's statement at another time,—"The whole need not a physician, but the sick." In reality there are none whole, all are sick; but only those who realize their sickness apply to the physician for his remedies.

Not only did our Lord justify his course in receiving the kind offices of penitent Mary, but, turning the argument, he administered a gentle but sharp reproof to Simon; he pointed out that he had neglected the common courtesies of that country and time. It was customary then to receive guests with a kiss, as it is now our custom to shake hands; it was customary then to provide water for the washing of the guest's feet, uncomfortable by reason of travel along the dusty

roads of that time; in the case of an honored guest a servant would be sent to wash the feet. Furthermore, with special guests sometimes perfumed ointments for the hair and toilet were provided. Our Lord calls Simon's attention to the fact that these little courtesies had been ignored by him, but had been more than made up for by Mary; and that the secret of the difference of sentiment lay in the fact that Simon loved him little, and that Mary loved him much.

It could not be that Simon had accidentally omitted these courtesies, for all Pharisees were punctilious on the subject of washings; nor need we suppose that it was an intentional slight put on our Lord. On the contrary, we may reasonably suppose that Simon, like Nicodemus, had a genuine interest in the Lord, and a surmise that he was a more than ordinary prophet. But both Simon and Nicodemus belonged to the respectable class, or higher caste, and came under the description of John (12:42, 43), "Nevertheless, among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

Nicodemus came to the Lord by night to interview him, but Simon more shrewdly thought to get the opportunity of a conversation directly with the Lord by inviting him to dinner; but to prevent the thought that he had anything more than a general interest and curiosity respecting Christ, and thus to maintain the good opinion of his co-religionists, he treated the Lord and the disciples, who evidently were also guests, as persons of a lower caste; and as though he thought that it was a sufficient honor to them to be his guests at all, he entertained them as inferiors; although, probably, could he have done so without endangering his standing as a Pharisee, he would have enjoyed extending to the Lord every courtesy.

How many who like Mary have realized their sins and have appreciated the divine mercy in the forgiveness of their sins have almost envied Mary her privilege of touching the feet of the blessed Master and, as he declared, "anointing them for his burial." With us, such opportunity might properly be appreciated still more highly, because of greater knowledge; for we have learned what Mary probably very imperfectly understood, that our Lord Jesus for our sakes left the glory which he had with the Father and humbled himself to human conditions in order that we through his poverty might be made rich. And not only so: Mary at this time had no knowledge of the extent to which the Master would go on her behalf and ours, to redeem us from sin and its sentence of death;—Calvary was then still in the future.

What a comforting thought it should be to all who are of Mary's attitude of mind that it is still possible to wash and to anoint the Lord's feet. His own lips have declared that, whatever is done for the least one of his consecrated followers, is accepted by him as done unto himself. Ah! blessed thought; the Lord is still in the flesh, representatively; his faithful are to be esteemed "members of his body," as new creatures. And while these are still in the flesh, the sufferings of Christ in the flesh are still in progress, and will not be finished until the last member has been glorified.—Col. 1:24.

Moreover, the Scriptural figure holds good: Christ is the Head of this body which is his church, and which for eighteen hundred years has been in process of development; and now the last members of the body are here,—"The feet of him." As members of the feet class many are weary, discouraged, needing rest, refreshment and comfort, such as was bestowed upon the literal feet of the Master.

Here comes in a test with respect to the symbolic feet of Christ, similar to that with respect to the natural feet which proved the great love of Mary and the slight love of Simon. The members of the feet class are unpopular today as was the Master himself in his day, with a class corresponding to the Scribes and Pharisees and Doctors of the Law. Only those who love the Master much and appreciate greatly their own forgiveness will love his "feet members" in the present time to the extent that they would be willing to serve them and to fellowship them; while others like Nicodemus and Simon, although well-meaning and considerably interested, will be ashamed of the Gospel of the Nazarene in the present time, and ashamed of his feet, which published to Zion glad tidings, saying, "Thy God reigneth"—the Millennial age is dawning and the reign of Christ has already begun. (Isa. 52:7) But those who are ashamed either of the Gospel or of its servants are ashamed of the Master and of the Father; and such cannot be recognized as "overcomers" of the world, because instead they are overcome by the world and its spirit. Such shall not be accounted worthy to progress into the full knowledge and privileges of discipleship.

How few there are who seem to have a large measure of the spirit of Mary Magdalene! How few are really very helpful to one another. How few pour upon one another the spikenard ointment of comforting words, helpful suggestions and encouragements. Those who are thus helpful will be found filled with a genuine love for the "Head," for the "body" in general and even for the "feet." And the secret of their love as in Mary's case will be found to be a large appreciation of their own imperfections and of the Lord's mercy and grace toward them, in the forgiveness of their sins. The Apostle expresses the sentiments of these helpful and loving members of the body, who are the only ones who are making their calling and election sure, saying,—"For we thus judge, that if one died for all then were all dead; and that we who live should not henceforth live unto ourselves, but unto him who died for us and rose again."

"WASH ONE ANOTHER'S FEET"

It was shortly after the incident related foregoing that our Lord, alone with the twelve disciples, took a basin of water and a towel and began to wash the disciples' feet. Strange indeed, this conduct seemed to them: not only their Master's words but also his actions were inexplicable riddles to them. He had acknowledged himself as the Son of God, the Messiah, their Lord and Master; and yet here he was, kneeling before them in the attitude of the humblest servant, washing their feet. Wondering and dumbfounded, but accustomed to obey the Master, no remark or protest was made until in turn he came to Peter. But Peter, as humble as he was bold, refused to allow the Master to perform the menial service, until assured that the explanation of it would be given after the service had been performed, and that unless he was washed he could have no part with the Master, whereupon he desired that his head and his hands as well as his feet might be washed.

Since literal feet-washing was frequent, the custom of that day, and almost indispensable to comfort, we may suppose that our Lord's example would be frequently followed in the early church. But, we do not see in it any command that feet-washing should be performed simply as a ceremony—regardless of its usefulness and its convenience.

Our Lord's words to Peter, "If I wash thee not thou hast no part with me," certainly imply that the washing was more than a mere ceremony—more also than a mere expression of humility, as we shall endeavor to show. Nevertheless, the principle should hold good in every time and in every clime: that whatever useful service can be rendered to a fellow-member of the body of Christ, however humble or menial, it should be performed, as unto the Lord.

Having finished the service, the Master explained its significance. He had set them an example (1) of humility, in being willing to perform the most menial service to those who were truly his; (2) the washing was an illustration of a great truth, namely, that although already cleansed by the Lord—justified freely from all things, through faith in him—yet that there were certain defilements which would attach to each of them so long as they would be in the world, from contact with its evils and besetments. While the general washing (justification) would stand good for all time, yet they would need continually (figuratively) to wash one another's feet—with the "washing of water by the word." (Eph. 5:26) This would signify that they should have a mutual watch-care over one another's welfare; to keep each other clean, holy, pure, and to assist one another in overcoming the trials and temptations and besetments of this present evil world;—arising from the three sources of temptation, "the world, the flesh and the devil."

This cleansing work which is to be done for one another is in harmony with the injunction, "Keep yourselves in the love of God." They could not get each other into the love of God: that could be attained only in the one way; through the original cleansing of the precious blood, through faith, and no one can thus cleanse us or help us into divine favor except the Redeemer himself. But he having cleansed us and brought us into divine favor, has commissioned us that we should help one another to "abide in his love" and to keep ourselves unspotted from the world. The merit, the way and the privilege are all of God through Christ. The agencies used in applying these to one another are ourselves. "Ye ought also to wash one another's feet;" to help keep each other separate from the world, and clean through the Word he has spoken unto us—by "the washing of water by the Word;" "building one another up in the most holy faith."

This again reminds us of the Scriptural statement, in reference to the church perfected and glorified,—"His wife hath made herself ready." (Rev. 19:7) While the entire arrangement for her wedding robes, the washing of regeneration (justification) and the water for her feet-washing, are

all provided for the bride through the agency of the Bridegroom, and she is thus made ready, yet the use of these means, the putting on of her adornment, the embroidering of her robes and the arrangement of the jewels presented to her through the Spirit, is left for herself to do; each member of the body coöperating unto the edification of the whole body.

It would doubtless be pleasing in the sight of the Master, our Head, that we should have a disposition to help and to reform the world in general, and to wash the vilest of the vile from all their sin; but however praiseworthy such a disposition might be, we are to remember that this is not the command which he has placed before us in our text. His injunction here is not to do general washing of all the unclean, but to do special washing for those whom he already has cleansed, justified, through faith. It is in respect to the fellow-members of his body that he has given this charge; and we emphasize it here, because this fact seems to be very generally overlooked by Christian people, who give their time rather to the outward cleansing, the moral and social uplifting, of those whose hearts have never been washed by the Master, and correspondingly neglect one another, his "feet." Yet, as already seen, preceding, though it is a great honor to render such a service to one another, the privilege will be properly appreciated and much used only by the truly humble who have much love for the Master.

But it requires peculiar qualifications to enable us to help each other in this respect; before we can help others to remove the motes out of their eyes, and to cleanse their way of life, in all its little particulars, so that every thought as well as every word and act shall be brought into subjection to the divine will, it is necessary that we have experiences along the same lines ourselves. We must endeavor to get rid of the motes and beams that would obstruct our own vision. We must cultivate purity in our own lives,—in our deeds, words and thoughts. Only as we cultivate the various graces of the spirit,—meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, love, can we hope to be specially helpful to others in putting on these adornments of character and purities of life, and to get rid of defilements of the world, and the flesh.

To this end it will be found helpful to remember the lesson of Mary in her service to the Lord's literal feet. Many who would reject well-meaning criticisms of conduct, resent well-meant efforts to wash their feet, as interferences with their private business, would be very amenable to the influences of the same person if he approached them with such evidences of true devotion and loving interest as would be symbolized by tears. It is the sympathetic ones who are most successful in helping the various members of the body of Christ out of the difficulties, besetments and defilements incident to the following of the Lord in this present time. Oh, let us study and strive and pray that we may be very successful in obeying the Master's words, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

It will also be a great help and comfort to the fellow members of the body, if in connection with these efforts to help one another in the cleansing of our ways, by taking heed unto the Word of the Lord, we will have with us also some of the precious ointment of sympathetic and, as far as possible, commendatory and encouraging words, and helpful assistance: for all the members of the feet class who are seeking to walk worthy of the Lord need the ointment of sympathy and encouragement, as offsets to the trials, difficulties and persecutions incident to the "narrow way," coming to them from the great Adversary and his blinded servants.

THE SUM OF ALL GRACES IS LOVE

AUG. 22.—1 COR. 13:1-13.

"And now abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."—1 Cor. 13:13.

Next to the Great Teacher's sermon on the mount, stands this discourse upon Love by the great Apostle Paul. Both discourses teach the same lesson; but they approach it from different standpoints. As pupils in the school of Christ, all the instructions of the divine Word and providences are intended to develop our hearts and influence our conduct in harmony with the lines of love. This was the testimony of the Master when he said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another." Similarly he declared that the entire law of God to men is fulfilled in Love—toward God and toward men: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, with all thy mind, with all thy being, and with all thy strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Since, then, "Love is the fulfilling of the law," and "the bond of perfectness," without which no other grace of character would be truly beautiful, we do not wonder to find the statement in Scripture that "God is Love;" and again, that "He that loveth not, knoweth not God."

Our Lord declares, "This is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God"—the God who is Love. To know God in the sense here indicated means more than merely to know that there is a God; it means more than merely to know something of God's loving plan and character; it means to know God in the sense of personal acquaintance, and an appreciation of his character; and no one can have this knowledge except as he receives, partakes of, the Spirit of God, the spirit of holiness, the spirit of love. And this spirit of holiness and love cannot be acquired instantly; it is a growth, and its development is the chief business and should be the chief concern of all who hope to know God in the complete sense which will be rewarded with life eternal.

Hence, after Love's great provision of the Lamb of God, and the ransom of all mankind accomplished by him, all of its various steps for our deliverance from sin and death have been along the line of developing in us this character of love, the character of God, which, according to the divine standard, alone will make us acceptable before the Father and bring to us his grace of everlasting life. Oh, how important then, that we should be "taught of God" and develop this his character. "Learn of me," said our dear Redeemer; and well we may, for he is the express image of the Father's glorious character of Love. And "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ [the Father's holy Spirit, love] he is none of his."

To begin with, we are very poor material out of which to form likenesses of God's dear Son. (Rom. 8:29) We were "children of wrath even as others"—the original likeness of God possessed by father Adam before he transgressed has been sadly lost in the six thousand years intervening: hence, instead of finding ourselves in the divine likeness of love, we find that we were "born in sin, and shapen in iniquity" to such a degree that, instead of love being the natural ruling principle in our characters, it is in many instances almost entirely obliterated; and what remains is largely contaminated with evil, self-love and sin-love and carnal-love;—perversions which are in direct antagonism with the wholly unselfish love which is the essence of the divine character.

The work of grace for the world, during the Millennial age, will be to make known to all mankind the gracious character of God, and his provision for the salvation of all; and to transform all who are willing from the depravity of sin to the perfection of character—love: making mankind once more images of God. It will not only transform their wills, but it will also be accompanied by a physical transformation which will remove from them all the blemishes of sin, and all hereditary inclinations thereto, and leave them in the likeness of God, with a recollection of the undesirableness of sin and its evil consequences.

The work of grace for the church during this Gospel age is to transform our perverted characters and re-establish them in the divine character, love. Whoever fails of attaining this fails of attaining the will of God concerning him; and must necessarily fail of winning the prize set before us in the Gospel.

But since our transformation of mind or will is not accompanied by a physical transformation or restitution, it follows that so long as we are in the flesh, we shall be obliged to contend against its inherited weaknesses and dispositions to selfishness and sin. But this sharp and continual conflict not only selects a special overcoming class, but serves to develop the desired character more quickly than will the more easy processes of the Millennial age. In consequence, while it will require nearly a thousand years for the world's perfecting, the perfecting of the saints in character may be accomplished in a few years, under the special, sharp discipline and the special course of instruction designed for the "little flock." But whether in few years or many years, and whether with little or much friction of adversity, the transformation and polishing of character must be accomplished. This love-likeness of our wills to the will of God is the end to be sought, if we would finish our course with joy, and with good hopes for the eternal glory.

GIFTS IN THE EARLY CHURCH

In the early church God indicated in a miraculous manner his acceptance of those who consecrated themselves as followers of Christ, by the bestowal of what were termed "gifts

of the spirit." A particular account of these is given in the chapter preceding our lesson. (1 Cor. 12) The Apostle indicates that some enjoyed several of these gifts, remarking concerning himself that he had more than any of them. Not unnaturally the recipients of these gifts, while feeling thankful for such a recognition from heaven, realized that some gifts were more valuable than others: and the Apostle confirms this view and urges that they seek to use the highest and noblest gifts where several were possessed. And perceiving that the church was likely to consider that the possession of these gifts indicated such a measure of divine favor as would imply that they were overcomers and would ultimately gain the prize of their high calling, the Apostle took this opportunity, while discussing the gifts, to point out that their possession implied far less of divine favor than the recipients had supposed. To this end he points out in our lesson that these outward gifts of tongues, miracles, healings, etc., were necessarily and properly divided between the various members of the church for their mutual welfare, and to draw them and hold them together, making them mutually dependent upon one another. This being the case, all could not have the same gifts; but as he points out, God has divided these and set or established the various members and gifts in the body as it hath pleased him. Yet, it is proper that all should recognize the difference in the gifts, and each covet or desire earnestly to have and to use in the divine service the best gifts that God has been pleased to entrust to his stewardship. And then, the Apostle adds, "Yet show I unto you a more excellent way."

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT MORE DESIRABLE

This more excellent way is that, instead of seeking and striving for the "gifts," which were solely at God's disposal, they should seek for another kind of "gifts," otherwise called "fruits" of the same spirit; namely, faith, hope and love. These gifts are termed "*fruits* of the spirit," because, unlike the others, they grow gradually, and are not given miraculously. However humble a miraculous gift any member of the church might have, there would be nothing to hinder him from growing the largest "fruits of the spirit" by careful attention to the cultivation of his heart. If the chief "gifts" were not open to all, the greater and more precious "fruits" were open to all; and to desire and cultivate these is much more excellent than to strive after miraculous gifts or talents which God has not been pleased of his own volition to bestow.

Proceeding along this line, the Apostle calls attention to the fact that any one, or even all, of the miraculous "gifts" might be possessed, and yet the recipient be far from the condition of heart which would be fit for the kingdom. The quality which is necessary, as a basis of character, which would make any service acceptable to God or cause it to be appreciated or esteemed by him, is love. If love be not the motive power, the greatest zeal and richest rhetoric and eloquence on behalf of God or on behalf of righteousness, would pass for nothing in God's estimation, and bring us no reward from him. If love be lacking, great ability as an expounder of mysteries, and much study and knowledge would pass for nothing in God's esteem. Even a faith that could cure all manner of diseases, or, to use our Lord's illustration of the largest degree of faith of this kind, a mountain-moving faith (Matt. 21:21) would count for nothing, if, deep in our hearts as the basis therefor, God could not see love,—for himself and for our fellow-creatures. Even the giving of all of one's possessions to feed the poor, as charity, would count for naught except the moving cause were love. And even to be a martyr, and to be burned at the stake in the name of Christ, would pass for naught except in the recesses of the heart God could see that the moving consideration to the suffering was love. Because, all of these things, the acquisition of knowledge, the dispensing of it with eloquence, the exercise of mountain-moving faith, and the giving of all of one's goods to the poor, and his own martyrdom, might be done from selfish motives—to be seen of men, to be highly esteemed by men, for ostentation, for pride, or because of a combative disposition. For this cause the Apostle exhorted the church to seek for this inestimable fruitage of the spirit,—love; so that whatever gifts they might possess, either natural or miraculous, might be exercised in a manner that would be a blessing to their fellows and acceptable to God, and bring the users the great reward,—eternal life.

What then is love, this wonderful quality without which nothing is acceptable in the sight of God? The Apostle does not attempt to define love, but contents himself in giving us a description of some of its manifestations. The fact is that love, like life and light, is difficult to define; and our best endeavors to comprehend it are along the lines of its effects. Where love is lacking results are more or less evil; where love is present the results differ according to the degree of love, and are proportionately good. A college professor, commenting upon the word love, said:

"As you have seen a man of science take a beam of light and pass it through a crystal prism, as you have seen it come out on the other side of the prism broken up into its component colors—red, and blue, and yellow, and violet, and orange, and all the colors of the rainbow—so Paul passes this thing, love, through the magnificent prism of his inspired intellect, and it comes out on the other side broken up into its elements. And in these few words we have what one might call the spectrum of love, the analysis of love. Will you observe what its elements are? Will you notice that they have common names; that they are features which we hear about every day, that they are things which can be practiced by every man in every place in life; and how by a multitude of small things and ordinary virtues, the supreme thing, the *summum bonum*, is made up?

"The spectrum of love has nine ingredients:—
Patience—'love suffereth long.'
Kindness—'and is kind.'
Generosity—'love envieth not.'
Humility—'love vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.'
Courtesy—'does not behave itself unseemly.'
Unselfishness—'seeketh not her own.'
Good temper—'is not easily provoked.'
Guilelessness—'thinketh no evil.'
Sincerity—'rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth.'"

We cannot agree with the professor that these graces can be practiced by every man, in every place, every day. We must contend that these graces as a whole cannot belong to "the natural man." He may indeed put on some of the gentleness, some of the humility, some of the courtesy, some of the patience, some of the kindness; as men may attach grapes to thorn-bushes and figs to thistles; but with the natural man these graces are wholly put on, and not the outgrowth of the inward grace, the holy Spirit, love;—not an evidence of relationship to God. Where the imitator has not been begotten again, by the Word and spirit of truth, his imitation of certain outward features of love will not constitute him a son of God nor bring to him the rewards and blessings of sonship to which there is but one door,—Christ Jesus.

In the Christian, an outward manifestation of patience, meekness, etc., is not sufficient either in God's sight or in his own sight. These graces of the spirit must be produced by the spirit of love, filling and expanding within his own heart. But in civilized countries many of the graces of the spirit are recognized by the unregenerate, and are imitated as marks of good breeding: and in many cases they are successfully worn as a cloak or mask, covering hearts and sentiments quite antagonistic to the holy Spirit of love.

The putting on of the outward forms of love does however mitigate the evils and distress and friction incident to the fall, even in "the natural man," even when these graces are merely simulated with more or less of hypocrisy and deception as to the real selfishness of the uncircumcised heart. But trying times occasionally show how thin is the polished veneer of politeness and gentleness which covers selfish and stony hearts: for instance, the last reports from the recent holocaust at the Charity Bazaar in Paris, shows that the most polished and aristocratic young "*gentle*-men" of the most polite city and nation of earth displayed the ferocity of brute beasts when face to face with death, and that in their mad rush to escape the flames they knocked down, and injured each other and even the first ladies of rank in France, to whom erstwhile they were overly polite. We cannot expect more of a love-veneered selfish heart—even the strong glue of chivalry will not hold the veneer under some such cases. And the time is not far distant when a still greater, more general and more terrible crisis will make manifest to the whole world that much of the politeness and gentleness of our day is only skin deep, and is not from the heart, the fruitage of the holy Spirit of love. In that great crisis, as the Scriptures show, every man's hand will be against his neighbor. In that day of vengeance the masks of formal politeness will be discarded, and the world for a short time will get such a glimpse of its own hideous selfishness as will help prepare it for Millennial lessons in love and its graces, to be given them by the great Immanuel.

The Scriptures inform us that in our fallen state love is foreign to our natures, and must be introduced into them by the power of God; saying,—"Not that we first loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins." And, learning of this, God's love,

and truly believing and appreciating it, "the love of Christ constraineth us [to love]." We are "begotten by the Word of truth,"—the message of God's love toward us in the forgiveness of our sins, and his call to us to return to his favor and likeness, and his provision of the helps by the way that we might become copies of his dear Son.

The measure of our appreciation of divine love will be the measure of our zeal in conforming our characters to the divine pattern. A naturally rough, uncouth, depraved disposition may require a long time, after the grace of divine love enters the heart, before that grace is manifest in all the words and thoughts and acts of the outward man. Others, on the contrary, of more gentle birth and cultured training, may without the grace of God within have many of the outward refinements. None but he that readeth the heart is competent therefore to judge as to who have and who have not received this grace, and of the degree of its development in their hearts: but each one may judge for himself, and each one begotten by this holy spirit, love, should seek to let its light so shine out, through all the avenues of communication with his fellow-creatures, as to glorify our Father in heaven and "show forth the glories of him who called us out of darkness into his marvelous light."

Perfect love is patient with the weaknesses and imperfections of those who give any evidence of good intentions. More than this, it is patient even with those who are out of the way, and that oppose themselves to righteousness, realizing that the whole world is more or less under the influence of the great adversary who, as the Apostle declares, blinds the minds of the masses. This manifestation of love was very prominent in our Lord Jesus: how patient was he with his opponents. Let us heed the Apostle's words:—"Consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied [in well-doing and patience] and faint in your minds."—Heb. 12:3.

Perfect love is kind in its methods. It not only seeks to do good to others, but seeks to do it in the kindest possible manner. And who has not discovered that the manner and tone have much to do with every affair of life. In proportion as perfect love is attained the effort of the heart will be to have every word and act, like the thought which prompts them, full of kindness. It is well to remember the motto of the old Quaker,—"I shall pass through this world but once. Any good thing, therefore, that I can do, or any kindness that I can show to any human being, let me do it now. Let me not defer it, nor neglect it, for I shall not pass this way again."

Perfect love is generous and has no place for envy, which, on the contrary, springs from a perverted nature—from selfishness. Love on the contrary rejoices with them that rejoice in the prosperity of every good work and word, and in the advancement in Christian grace and in the divine service of all who are actuated by the divine spirit.

Perfect love is humble—"vaunteth not itself." It does not sound a trumpet before it. Its good deeds are not done to be seen of men, but would be done just the same if no one saw or knew but God only. It is neither boastful of its knowledge, nor of its graces, but in humility acknowledges that every good and perfect gift cometh from the Father; and it makes return for every mercy to him. Some one has truly said that—"Love saves a man from making a fool of himself by consequential conduct, and by thrusting himself into positions which betray his incompetence."

Perfect love is courteous—"doth not behave itself unseemly." Pride is the root out of which grows most of the unseemly conduct and boorishness so common to those who think themselves somebody, either intellectually or financially. Perfect love on the contrary develops courteousness along with humility. A thoughtful man has said,—"Politeness has been defined as love in trifles. Courtesy is said to be love in little things. The one secret of politeness is to love. A gentleman is one who does things gently, with love."

Perfect love is unselfish—"seeketh not her own" interests, exclusively. Nothing in this signifies that one should neglect the duty of caring for and providing for those dependent upon him by ties of nature, that he may do good to others. In every sense, "Love begins at home." The proper thought, as we gather it, is that the men and women possessed of the spirit of perfect love, would not think *exclusively* of their own interests in any of the affairs of life. In bargaining they would have an interest also in the welfare of the one from whom they bought or to whom they sold. They would not wish to take advantage of a neighbor, but sympathetically and generously would wish to "live and let live." Put into exercise, this element of Love would have a great influence upon all the affairs of life, inside as well as outside the home and family.

Perfect love is good tempered—"not easily provoked" to anger. Among the evils abounding and very common today, is this one of ill-temper, fretfulness, bad humor, touchiness, quickness to take offence. Yet, to whatever extent this disposition is fostered, or willingly harbored, or not fought against, it becomes an evidence of a deficiency and imperfection of our development in the holy Spirit of our Father, and of the deficiency of our likeness to our Lord Jesus, our Pattern. Very few of the evidences of a wrong spirit receive as much kindness and as many excuses for their continuance as does this one. But however natural depravity, and heredity, and nervous disorders, may tend toward this spirit of fretfulness, taciturnity, and touchiness, every heart filled with the Lord's Spirit must oppose this disposition to evil in his flesh, and must wage a good warfare against it. It will not do to say, "It is my way;" for all the ways of the fallen nature are bad: it is the business of the new nature to overcome the old nature in this as well as other works of the flesh and the devil: and few show to our friends and households more than this the power of the grace of Love. This grace as it grows should make every child of God sweet tempered.

Perfect love is guileless—"thinketh no evil." It seeks to interpret the conduct of others charitably. If pure and good intentioned itself, it prefers, and so far as possible endeavors, to view the words and conduct of others from the same standpoint. It does not treasure up animosities and suspicions, nor manufacture a chain of circumstantial proofs of evil intentions out of trivial affairs. Some one has wisely remarked that "faults are thick where love is thin." Love makes all possible allowance for errors of judgment, rather than to impugn the motives of the heart.

Perfect love is sincere—"rejoiceth not in iniquity." It is grieved by evils wherever encountered, sympathizes with all who fall into evil, or who are beset by temptations. In this respect love prompts to an opposite course of action from that of Balaam, who "loved the reward of iniquity." Balaam, it will be remembered, feared the Lord, and as his prophet could not think of doing otherwise than according to the strict letter of the Lord's injunction; but he did not have the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of love; and hence, when a reward was offered him if he would curse Israel, he was willing (in order to secure the reward) to conform to the evil proposition in spirit, in intention, while outwardly refraining from saying aught except as the Lord indicated. So, there are some amongst Christians who have a respect for the letter of the divine word through fear, but who lack the holy Spirit of love, and who by reason of a perverted love for wealth, etc., are willing to engage in various practices which come as near to the injury of the Lord's cause as is possible, without openly opposing him. Some of these Balaams are in the ministry and for the sake of salary, and the maintenance of their positions, and the friendship of wealthy Balaks, are willing to preach doctrines which they do not believe (respecting eternal torment, etc.), and in various ways to cast stumbling blocks before spiritual Israel. (Num. 22:7; 31:16; Rev. 2:14) The Apostle mentions these Balaams as being specially represented by false teachers in the nominal church.—See 2 Pet. 2:15; Jude 11; Rev. 2:14.

Every one who is seeking to develop in his heart the holy spirit, perfect love, should guard carefully this point of sincerity of motive as well as uprightness of conduct. The least suggestion of rejoicing at the fall of any person or thing that in any degree represents righteousness and goodness, is to be deplored and overcome. Perfect love rejoiceth not in iniquity under any circumstances or conditions, and would have no sympathy but only sorrow in the fall of another, even if it should mean his own advancement.

Perfect love "rejoiceth in the truth." However profitable error might be, Love could take no part in it, and could not desire the reward of evil. But it does take pleasure in the truth—truth upon every subject, and especially in the truth of divine revelation; however unpopular the truth may be; however much persecution its advocacy may involve; however much it may cause the loss of the friendship of this world and of those who are blinded by the god of this world. The spirit of love has such an affinity for the truth that it rejoices to share loss, persecution, distress or whatever may come against the truth and its servants. In the Lord's estimate it is all the same whether we are ashamed of him or ashamed of his Word, and of all such he declares that he will be ashamed when he comes to be glorified in his saints.

Perfect love "beareth all things." It is both willing and able to endure for the cause of God—reproaches, reproofs, insults, losses, misrepresentations and even death. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even your faith"—the very center and life of which faith is the holy spirit of love to the Lord and to them that are his, and sympathetically for the world. Perfect love can bear up under all circumstances and by God's grace bring us off "conquerors and more than conquerors" through him who loved us.

Perfect love "believeth all things." It is not suspicious, but on the contrary disposed to be trustful. It acts on the principle that it is better if necessary to be deceived a hundred times, than to go through life soured by a distrustful suspicious mind—far better than to wrongly accuse or suspicion even one person unjustly. This is the merciful disposition as applied to thoughts, and of it the Master said, "Blessed are the merciful, they shall obtain mercy." The unmerciful, evil-thinking mind is father to unmerciful conduct toward others.

Perfect love "hopeth all things." It is not easily discouraged. This is the secret of love's perseverance; having learned of God, and having become a partaker of his spirit of holiness, it trusts in him and hopes undismayed for the fulfillment of his gracious Covenant, however dark the immediate surroundings. This hopeful element of love is one of the striking features in the perseverance of the saints, enabling them to endure hardness as good soldiers. Its hopeful quality hinders it from being easily offended, or easily stopped in the work of the Lord. Where others would be discouraged and put to flight, the spirit of love gives endurance, that we may war a good warfare, and please the Captain of our salvation. Love's hopefulness knows no despair, for its anchorage enters into that which is beyond the vail, and is firmly fastened to the Rock of Ages.

FAITH, HOPE AND LOVE ABIDE FOREVER

Not only is love the greatest of all the graces and really, as we have seen, the sum of them all in combination and unification, but it is the most lasting grace: love never faileth—will never cease; and he who has this character of love will never fail, will never cease: It is for such that eternal life has been provided in the divine plan.

Now bear in mind the Apostle's argument to the Corinthian friends: (1) that the gifts of miracles, tongues, etc., bestowed upon them by the spirit, were divided amongst them according to talent or divine wisdom, and were not the results of their own efforts; (2) that he is pointing out to them a grace much more excellent than those "gifts," something that God will be pleased to give to each one of them; a grace of more value than any of the "gifts"—of much more value than all of them together; a grace that might properly be termed a fruitage of the spirit,—love. And the fact is that some possessed of few talents have proportionately less to contend against while seeking to cultivate the all-important love.

Having described this wonderful and necessary element of character in its perfection, the Apostle comes back and contrasts it with those "gifts" which they so highly appreciated and coveted, and shows that the chiefest of those "gifts" are inferior to love. The gift of prophecy he declares will fail, will cease; because the necessity for prophecy would cease: the miraculous power of speaking with unknown tongues would cease for the same reason: the knowledge of mysteries and the ability to expound the deep things of God will gradually vanish away, as the perfect light gradually comes to all men; for when the full, clear light shall have come there will be nothing hidden, all shall be revealed, and all will be able to see; hence the gifts of ability to understand mysteries of the divine plan and to expound them to others, altho two of the greatest of the gifts, will ultimately vanish in the perfect light: but love will never fail. It is the greatest thing in the world, and it will continue the greatest thing in the world to come; for God is love; and all who would enjoy his favor and its reward, eternal life, must possess this, his holy character.

Pausing, the Apostle remarks how little we all know in the present time; even those who have the largest amount of knowledge and who can expound the divine Word and its hidden mysteries, know only in part; they see only obscurely: and while the obscurity will gradually vanish into the perfect light as the Sun of Righteousness arises, yet we will only know in part until that time, when we shall be "changed;" when imperfection shall give place to perfection.

Looking back to childhood we can see that as we have developed physically and grown in knowledge in earthly matters, and have changed our processes of thought and conduct and language correspondingly; so in spiritual matters we should realize that in the beginning of our Christian way we were but "babes;" and we should not be satisfied to remain such, but desire individually to grow up into Christ in all things. And what is true of each individually is true of the church collectively. The period of the gifts of tongues and miracles was the period of infancy, childhood; as progress was made, under the leading of the holy spirit, certain of those features very necessary and well adapted to the childhood stage passed away, and instead came other experiences, methods and leadings in the truth. Hence, today the "tongues" are gone, the "prophesying" in the sense of foretelling future events is gone, the "miracles" are gone, etc., after having served their purposes well. But the Lord still continues to provide in the church "knowledge," even tho it be but imperfect knowledge; he still continues to provide methods for evangelizing or spreading the news of the truth to the unbelieving; he still provides teachers and helps in the church. But these are not usually provided miraculously, as at first, but naturally and by the addition of the Lord's blessing to natural qualifications. But all these will cease so far as the church is concerned when her course is finished; —"when that which is perfect is come," she will have no further need of these imperfect helps.

Three gifts of the Spirit, of the kind developed as fruits, will survive; and these three are to be earnestly sought and diligently cultivated; they are faith, hope and love: but the greatest, the chiefest, of these is love. Faith and hope, altho they are two of the most necessary qualities for the present time, in aiding us in making our calling and election sure, and two which will never cease to all eternity, will measurably lose their active operations, "when that which is perfect is come;" because in a large degree and in reference to many subjects, sight and knowledge will take the place of faith and hope. But love will never fail, never fade, never grow dim. It will be as active and glorious and useful in the life to come as it is now. Indeed, the sum of the future perfest life will be love.

* * *

Let us, dear readers, with all our getting, get love—not merely in word, but in deed and in truth; the love whose roots are in the "new heart," begotten in us by our heavenly Father's love, exemplified in the words and deeds of our Redeemer. All else sought and gained will be but loss and dross unless with all we secure love.

The Editor has a proposal to make to every reader, which he believes will be helpful to all who coöperate. It is thus:—

(1) That during the remainder of this year each of us pray every morning, that the Lord will bless us in the cultivation of love in thoughts and words and deeds throughout the day; and that every evening, when reviewing the events of the day at the throne of the heavenly grace, we remember to report to the Lord respecting our measure of success or failure.

(2) That during the remainder of this year we read carefully and thoughtfully every Sunday morning, alternately, 1 Corinthians 13 and Matthew 5:1-16. That those who would like to read in unison may do so, we mention that the Editor will read Matt. 5:1-16 on August 22, 1 Cor. 13 on Aug. 29, and thus onward alternately. Note the results of your watching and praying; keep on the lookout for all encouraging evidences of growth in this fruitage of the holy spirit: and, when you write to us, if you please, mention your progress in *willing* to love and in *practicing* it; we are specially glad to know of your growth *both* in grace and in knowledge.

My heart shall triumph in the Lord,
And bless his works, and bless his word.
His works of grace, how bright they shine!
How deep his counsels! how divine!

And I shall share a glorious part
When grace hath well refined my heart,
And fresh supplies of joy are shed,
Like holy oil, to cheer my head.

E'en now I see, and hear, and know
More than I hoped for here below,
And every pow'r finds sweet employ
Proclaiming tidings of great joy.

THE GOSPEL PREACHED AT EPHESUS

AUGUST 29.—ACTS 19:21-34.

"Take heed, and beware of covetousness."—Luke 12:15.

This lesson stands related to the history of Paul's evangelistic service amongst the Gentiles, connecting with our lesson dated August 1; and the intervening verses should be considered. Leaving Corinth, the Apostle made a short stop at the important city of Ephesus, parting there with Aquila and Priscilla who accompanied him that far. He proceeded to Jerusalem that he might be in time for the feast of the Passover, purposing no doubt a visit with the church there, amongst whom were several of the apostles and James our Lord's brother. The account of the visit to Jerusalem is briefly summed up by Luke in the statement that Paul "saluted the church." (Acts 18:22) Apparently, the reception accorded the great Apostle was a rather cool one, the believers there having not yet learned so thoroughly as had Paul that but a "remnant" would be gathered from the Jews, and the remainder of the elect church be selected from the Gentiles. Canon Farrar makes a remark on this visit by Paul to Jerusalem which is well worth repeating; he says,—

"Had James and the circle of which he was the centre, only understood how vast for the future Christianity would be the issues of these perilous and toilsome journeys, ... with what affection and admiration would they have welcomed him! So far from this, St. Luke hurries over the brief visit in three words that he 'saluted the church;' . . . . there is too much reason to fear that his reception was cold and ungracious; that even if James received him with courtesy, the Judaic Christians who surrounded 'the Lord's brother' would not; and even that a jealous dislike of that free position towards the Law, which he established amongst his Gentile converts, led to that determination upon the part of some of them to follow in his track and to undermine his influence, which, to the intense embitterment of his later days, was so fatefully successful. It must have been with a sad heart, with something even of indignation at this unsympathetic coldness, that St. Paul hurriedly terminated his visit. But none of these things moved him."

Oh, how much some of the "brethren" missed it, when they failed to recognize the leading of the Lord's providence in connection with the work of the Apostle Paul. John-Mark, as we have already seen, and afterward his uncle Barnabas failed to see their great privilege in being co-workers together with that servant whom the Lord was pleased specially to use in the presentation of the gospel message at that time. And afterward we note how some "false apostles," not sent on any such errand, followed the Apostle into various cities where he by the Lord's grace had planted the truth and there sought, and to some extent succeeded in overturning his work—"teaching the people that they should keep the Law of Moses," etc. But we are not to understand that they really did injury to the Lord's work; for the Lord himself is behind his own work. Their teachings served as siftings to draw off those who were not Israelites indeed, and who had not received the perfect law of liberty through Christ. And they gave occasion for the writing of certain parts of Paul's epistles to counteract these errors, which have proven a blessing and a great help to the Lord's people for the eighteen centuries since. Thus does the Lord overrule the work of evil for good to those who love him and who are in the proper attitude of heart to be "taught of God."—See 2 Cor. 11:13; Gal. 2:4; 5:4.

Returning to Ephesus the Apostle remained there for three years, finding it an excellent field from which the influence of the Gospel would radiate through all Asia-Minor. Ephesus was one of the most important cities of that time, its population being chiefly Greeks. It was called "one of the eyes of Asia." It had a colosseum or place for public gatherings, capable of accomodating fifty thousand people, and one of its chief attractions was an immense and grand temple erected to the honor of the goddess Diana, and it was the centre of her cult, whose influence and numbers extended throughout all Asia-Minor. The temple was built of the purest marble: the historian says of it:—

"It was 425 feet long and 220 broad; its columns of Parian marble were 60 feet high, and 36 of them were magnificently carved. The porticoes in front and rear consisted each of 32 columns; the entire number of columns, 127, being given each one by a king. The hall was adorned with the most wonderful statuary and paintings."

From this description we readily see that the character of the idolatry with which the Apostle had to contend was very widely different from that of the South Sea Islanders. Its majestic temples were not out of harmony with its priesthood and general features, all of which were evidently on an impressive scale, quite in harmony with its devotees, —intelligent and cultured people, as the Ephesians were.

The account shows that in the interim of Paul's visit to Jerusalem the Lord prepared the way at Ephesus for the greater work of the three years' ministry which followed; for Apollos had in the meantime visited Ephesus,—mighty in the Scriptures as far as he understood them, but "knowing only the baptism of John" unto repentance, and faith in Christ as the Messiah. Apollos apparently had not learned particularly respecting the new dispensation, and the gifts of the spirit by which it was being introduced. But Aquila and Priscilla, altho not themselves gifted so as to be able to speak in public, hearing of Apollos and his good work, sought him out, invited him to their home and there found quiet opportunity for imparting to him a clearer knowledge of the new dispensation: thus they became sharers in the fruits of his subsequent efficiency.

When Paul arrived at Ephesus Apollos was gone, but some whom he had interested were soon found and instructed respecting the gifts of the holy Spirit; then being baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus they received some of the gifts. The real baptism of consecration to the Lord Jesus as his servants, was no doubt part of the Apostle's explanation; but this was followed by instruction with reference to baptism in water, and these brethren, twelve in number, being of proper and teachable spirit, were not only willing but anxious to render obedience to every feature of the divine will; and having by their immersion in water publicly confessed Christ and themselves as his servants "dead with him," they were blessed with a share of the gifts, some of which were granted to every believer in that time;—as we have already seen in the lesson preceding.

As usual, wherever the truth is preached there is a division; not merely a division as between those who respect God and his Word and those who deny the true God, but further than this, amongst those who acknowledge the true God and Scriptures;—a division respecting Christ, and especially respecting the work of Christ, the value of the cross and the blessings which now and thereafter shall flow therefrom, to the blessing ultimately of all the families of the earth. The Apostle was not surprised at the division; he expected it. He doubtless remembered the Lord's words, "I am not come to send peace but a sword" and to cause division: it was better that the sincere followers of Christ should meet by themselves than that they should meet with others whose opposition to the truth would make continual disturbance, or else hinder their advancement into further knowledge and grace. It was for this reason that the Apostle secured, probably by hire, for use on certain occasions for meetings, the schoolroom of Tyrannus.

Ephesus was a great city for magic, incantations, divinations, etc. The worship of Diana and the delusions connected therewith, "black art," etc., were (like all the heathen religious practices) devices of Satan and the fallen angels, whereby the people were made to believe in the power of Diana for good and evil, for health and sickness, for safety or accident. A vessel going to sea in order to have a prosperous journey it was thought must have on board a miniature "shrine of Diana." The individual who wished for luck repeated certain words or prayers to Diana and wore upon his breast a charm or amulet marked with her likeness or with a prayer to Diana (much after the manner that Roman Catholics wear upon their bosoms what are termed "scalpel," blessed with prayers to the Virgin Mary, with holy water, masses, etc.). As we have already seen,* the powers of darkness (Satan and the fallen angels) have liberty and ability to perform wonders of certain kinds under certain circumstances, just as Jannes and Jambres had power from the same source as recorded in Exodus 7:11. In consequence we are not surprised that the Lord greatly blessed the Apostle Paul in Ephesus with powers of the holy Spirit which enabled him to more than meet the powers of darkness. The record is, "God wrought special miracles by the hand of Paul: so that from his body were brought handkerchiefs and aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them." This naturally attracted the attention of all classes to the Gospel which Paul preached, and to the power of God which was with him—whose manifestation was so different from the power which was with the workers of magic and incantations. The attempt of certain vagabond Jews to do the same miracle of casting out demons, using the name of Paul, their failure and the fact that they were

* See "Spiritism—Demonism" in our issues June 15 to July 15.

worsted, the demons having no respect for them, helped to convince some respecting the Gospel—the very object intended by the Lord in the giving of "gifts."

"Many that believed came, and confessed, and showed their evil deeds [acknowledging that their works of magic were evil and from an evil source]. Many of them also which used curious arts [magic] brought their books together, and burned them before all." And when we are informed that the value of those books was 50,000 pieces of silver, estimated to be $9,300 in our money—but if calculated in proportion to the rate of wages then and now, equivalent to a very much larger sum—it will be manifest that the work of grace was moving mightily in Ephesus. When the Gospel so takes hold upon the lives of believers that they are willing not only to abandon evil ways, but to destroy the instruments of evil which previously had brought them gain, it proves that it is a genuine work and not a mere emotion. It is worthy of note also that these believers did not *sell* their books and merely go out of business of evil, but destroyed them, lest the work of evil should propagate itself further through this agency. "So mightily grew the Word of God and prevailed."—Acts 19:20.

With this connection we are the better enabled to understand the opposition which now arose; and why those who were engaged in making small images of Diana, and miniature copies of the temple, and charms, and amulets, and "Ephesian spells" should become so excited and realize that their craft was endangered, not only in Ephesus but throughout all Asia-Minor.

Having spent about three years in Ephesus, Paul's purpose of mind was to return again to Jerusalem after visiting the churches of Berea, Thessalonica, Philippi and Corinth; and his courageous heart was meditating a visit to the City of Rome, the seat of empire, where the Gospel would have an opportunity of reaching another intelligent class and be brought more particularly in contact with the governmental and military influences and perhaps be even more liable to provoke persecution than in his previous experiences; for Aquila and Priscilla had been expelled from Rome for being Jews: in harmony with this plan he sent two of his co-laborers before him into Macedonia.

But the Lord saw best to permit the adversary to raise up a persecution about this time, and, of course, Paul would in a large measure be the centre of it. This persecution was on strictly business lines. The manufacturers and workmen engaged in the producing of the images, amulets, charms, etc., of Diana, were gotten together by one of their craft, Demetrius, who pointed out to them that the progress of Christianity meant the destruction of their various trades and that now was the time to put a stop to it and to reënkindle amongst the people a fervor of sentiment for Diana. The scheme worked well, and soon a furor was created: the less intelligent masses being easily aroused by the cry, "Great is Diana."

It has been surmised that this riot occurred in May, the month of Diana's Festival, when usually there was the largest demand for the charms, amulets, etc., and that on this occasion business being less brisk than usual, the depression was laid to the charge of Christianity, whose influence was by this time considerable, and certainly every item of it in opposition to Diana. Ephesus was not only the shrine of Diana, but it was a great mercantile centre for Asia, as Corinth was for Greece, and the May Festival of Diana was accompanied by not only sacrifices in her temple and processions in her honor and prayers for her protection, but with these were associated wonderful displays in their theater or Colosseum,—gladiatorial combats, athletic feats, hippodrome races, etc. These drew people from far and near, and for a time, commercially, the city was a fair, and a large amount of business was done with the strangers. It was doubtless in order to have an opportunity of presenting the gospel to these multitudes from round about, that the Apostle delayed taking his journey into Macedonia until after the Feast of Diana.

Paul being the prominent leader in the promulgation of Christianity was of course the central figure against whom the rioters moved. It is supposed that he still made his home with Aquila and Priscilla and that the mob made directly for their lodgings: apparently, however they missed getting Paul, and as the next best thing took Gaius and Aristarchus, two of his co-laborers. It is probable that it was at this time that Aquila and Priscilla, as Paul's faithful friends, risked their lives in his protection, as intimated by the Apostle's statement in his epistle to the Romans (16:4) where he says of them that they "laid down their necks" for his life. When the mob got Gaius and Aristarchus they took them to the Colosseum (theater), the general place of rendezvous for large gatherings. Here Paul, full of courage, purposed to attempt to speak to the mob in defense of the Christian cause, but the Ephesian converts would not permit him, knowing better than he the vicious and unreasoning spirit of the superstitious lower classes of Ephesus.

When the mob got to the theater it was much confused, and of different opinions respecting the object of the gathering. Many of them evidently supposed that it was a tumult against the Jews,—a very likely mistake, since the Apostle and some of his co-laborers were Jews, and since the common people would probably only distinguish Christians as being a Jewish *sect*. Realizing this the Jews put forward Alexander. (Probably Alexander, the copper-smith, mentioned by the Apostle in 2 Tim. 4:14, possibly a convert to Christianity who subsequently apostatized.—1 Tim. 1:20) Alexander was put forward by the Jews evidently for the purpose of explaining to the mob that the Christians were *renegade* Jews, and that the Jews proper would thoroughly approve of and support their persecution as disturbers of the general peace; that the Jews in general were a commercial people, interested, therefore, in the festivities of Diana, and the associated business prosperity. However, the Lord did not permit so insidious an attack, Alexander not being permitted to speak.

The account here given is very brief, but is supplemented by the Apostle's own statement of the matter. (2 Cor. 1:8-10) "Concerning our affliction which befell us in Asia, that we were weighed down exceedingly beyond our power, insomuch that we despaired even of life: Yea, we ourselves have had the answer of death within ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raised the dead: who delivered us out of so great a death, and will deliver."

It was probably the intention of the ringleaders of the mob to have a "spectacle" in the Colosseum—to have the Apostle cast into the arena to be devoured by the wild beasts in the presence of the multitude. The Apostle refers seemingly to this persecution saying, "If I have fought with beasts at Ephesus" (1 Cor. 15:32) which would imply that if he did not have a combat of the kind intended for him, it came so near being such a conflict that it amounted to practically the same thing so far as his trials were concerned; —or it is barely possible that he referred to the Ephesian mob itself, as "beasts" seeking his life.

Two important lessons to be drawn from this narrative are (1) that thorough conversion to the Lord means a thorough abandonment of evil, whatever the cost, the self-denial, financial or social. (2) That the love of money is the root of all evil and a frequent cause of opposition to the Lord's Word and plan.

These principles, at work eighteen centuries ago, are still the same, and exercise similar influences today. And this is the very object of the truth during this Gospel age,—to be a test of our love for truth, for righteousness, for God. Sufficient evil is still permitted to test the Lord's people, to prove who are "overcomers." Those who are fully the Lord's are ready to lay down everything in his service—the service of righteousness. Just as the converts in Ephesus were willing to burn their once highly esteemed and commercially valuable books on magic, so today those who become the Lord's are ready to change their business if they find it consistent with righteousness and truth; and to lay down even life itself in the service of him who has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

And there is a class today, like Demetrius and his fellow-craftsman, who, as the Scriptures express it, "look every one to his own quarter for gain." It will be noticed that the business of Demetrius and his associates might be considered a *religious business*, inasmuch as they were forwarders of the worship of Diana: and so it is with a certain class today who are financially identified with the worship of "the image of the beast." (Rev. 13:14-17) These support various religious systems from which also they draw goodly compensation of honor, praise, titles, money and respect. These likewise often oppose the truth, and go as far as public sentiment and civil government will permit in opposing the truth and those who serve it, and in inciting opposition among the masses. Their reasons therefor are similar to those which influenced Demetrius and his companions; they realize that their "craft is in danger." It is for each individually to be on guard lest he be "led astray with the error of the wicked," and fall from his own steadfastness, and be found to fight against God either for financial interests or earthly ambition.

A SYNAGOGUE AND JEWS AT ATHENS

By an oversight (which however involved no principle or doctrine) we recently made the statement that there was no synagogue at Athens, and that no Jews resided there at the time of Paul's visit, whereas Acts 17:17 plainly states to the contrary. This furnishes first class evidence of the truthfulness of our claim that the WATCH TOWER is not infallible, but liable to Editorial as well as typographical errors. Our readers will therefore do well to keep a sharp look-out: and while we are always very careful as respects doctrinal statements, it is our desire to be correct also in respect to even the comparatively unimportant features of the divine Word; and this slip will make us the more careful.

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DIVINE SECRETS REVEALED

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his Covenant."—Psa. 25:14.

Is there any secret in connection with the divine plan? Are not all of God's arrangements so plain that "a wayfaring man, though unlearned, need not err therein?" Are not all of the steps of the plan of salvation so simple that even a child may understand them?

Oh, no! very evidently not; for everywhere we find the utmost diversity of opinion respecting the divine plan. Not only is there a great variety of heathen theories utterly false, but the various theories which obtain amongst Christian people are in violent antagonism the one to the other. Even amongst the worldly-wise of Christendom how various are the conceptions of God's intention and method respecting his creatures? These differences are represented in the various theologies of all the various sects. His plan is claimed to be one of "free grace" in which he gives an *equal opportunity* to all his creatures to share; yet, looking about us we see most evidently that all are not alike privileged, not alike informed and not alike circumstanced. On the other hand, there is the claim of an "election" which denies that grace is free to all, and holds that it is restricted to the favored few. Besides these, we have various other conflicting theories in Christendom, and the most obtuse thinker must admit that where so many theologians, college professors and doctors of divinity are in dispute, the unlearned "wayfaring man" has many chances to err in his endeavor to grasp the divine plan.

Observation therefore sustains, as most literally true, the statement of our text that the Lord's plan is a secret: and it is in agreement with the statement of other Scriptures respecting the "mystery of God," "hidden from past ages and dispensations." In harmony with this is the fact that all the prophets have spoken more or less obscurely and in parables, not excepting the Great Prophet, our Lord Jesus, of whom it is written, that "he taught the people in parables and dark sayings"—"and without a parable spake he not unto the people." He promised, nevertheless, that in due time the holy Spirit would be granted as a guide and instructor to his true disciples: "He will guide you into all truth" and "show you things to come." (Jno. 16:13) Some of the mysteries of God were due to be understood at once, and some more gradually down through the age, but the great unfolding of the divine mystery we are expressly told was reserved until the close of the Gospel age, when "the mystery of God should be finished," which he hath kept secret from the foundation of the world.—Rev. 10:7.

Even so much of the divine plan as was due to be revealed by the spirit and to be understood step by step during this Gospel age, was intended only for a special class, and not for the world in general. The Apostle Paul emphasized this when he declared, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." "But God hath revealed them unto *us* by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep [hidden, obscure] things of God."—1 Cor. 2:14, 10.

This same thought is before us in our text, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." As this has been true all the way down throughout this age, it is still true, and the finishing of "the mystery of God" in the close of this Gospel age must therefore be expected to be understood and appreciated only by this special class of the Lord's people,—those who fear or reverence him. We are to make a distinction between those who fear or reverence the Lord and those who fear or reverence man and the work of man, sectarian systems, creeds, etc. "The fear of man [and of man's churches] bringeth a snare," and hinders growth both in grace and in knowledge;—hinders an appreciation of the "secret of the Lord." "But the fear [reverence] of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and this wisdom, if continued, leads to fuller knowledge of God, to greater confidence in him, and to that degree of intimate friendship and sonship which is the key to the understanding of the "secret of the Lord."

Abraham was called the "friend of God;" because he had the divine confidence, so that God made known to him certain things that he did not make known to others: "The secret of the Lord" was with Abraham, so far as that secret could be communicated to any one at that time. For instance, in the matter of the destruction of Sodom, the Lord said, "Shall I hide from Abraham [my friend] that thing which I do?" And it was because Abraham was the friend of God that he also made known to him something of the divine plan for human salvation: as the Apostle declares, God "preached beforehand the Gospel to Abraham, saying: 'In thee shall all the nations be blessed.'"—Gal. 3:8.

While it was not possible for Abraham or any one else than God to fully comprehend this statement, or to understand therefrom the lengths and the breadths of the divine plan of salvation, yet it contained the whole Gospel, in the same sense that an acorn contains a great oak tree. So likewise our Lord at the first advent spoke in parables to the nominal house of Israel, that "Seeing they might see and not believe, and hearing they might hear and not understand;" yet, a certain few, full of faith and obedience and consecration to the Lord, were not thus treated; but, on the contrary, were treated as "friends" and had much explained to them. Thus our Lord said to the disciples when they inquired concerning the significance of a parable, "To you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God; but to them that are without, these things are spoken in parables." And again he said to the same devoted disciples, I have not called you servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doeth; but I have called *you friends*, because whatsoever I hear of the Father I have made known unto you.—John 15:15.

This "mystery" of the divine plan, hidden in parables, in figures, and in symbols from the world, and from the nominal Christian,—hidden from all except the fully consecrated children of God—is most beautifully symbolized in the Book of Revelation. As therein recounted, John was shown in a vision a symbolic panorama, illustrative of the subject. The heavenly glories were symbolized and the Father shown seated upon the throne of his glory, holding in his right hand a scroll sealed with seven seals. This was the *mystery*, the *secret* of the Lord, unknown to any one but himself—his plan for the salvation of the world. John in the symbol hears the proclamation, "Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals?"—who is worthy to have committed to his care, *the execution* of the great divine plan, wonderful for its wisdom and love, and its lengths and breadths and depths and heights past human comprehension—that he may open and execute it? A silence followed; and John fearing that this signified that none would be found worthy, and that hence the divine plan would never be fully revealed, and therefore could not be fully executed, wept much. But in the symbol the angel again touched him and said, "Weep not! for the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the 'Root of David,' hath prevailed to open the Book, and to loose the seven seals thereon."

Ah yes! this was one significance of the severe trials and sufferings of our dear Redeemer;—in humbling himself, leaving the glory with the Father, becoming a man and ultimately giving his life a ransom for all, he was doing two works: not only (1) redeeming us with his own precious blood, but (2) additionally by this obedience he was commending himself to the Father, and proving himself worthy to be the Father's agent and representative in carrying out all the great "mystery of God" hidden from previous ages and dispensations.—Eph. 3:3-5.

The interim of thirty odd years, in which our Lord's humiliation and subsequent exaltation took place, is all passed over in the vision, and the symbol merely shows in the midst of the throne "a Lamb, as it had been slain:" how forceful the illustration to those whose eyes are anointed that they may discern its meaning. And now the symbolical panorama proceeds, and shows us the Lamb approaching Jehovah and receiving from him "the mystery of his will," the great plan of the ages, as mapped out in the divine purpose from before the foundation of the world. As soon as the "mystery of God" was committed to "the Lamb of God," who had already fulfilled an important part of that plan by redeeming the

world with his own precious blood, he receives homage, as it is written: "Him hath God highly exalted, and given him a name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven and things on earth," and "that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father."

Then came the opening of the seals: the disclosing of one after another of the various features connected with the divine purpose. Each seal as it was loosed permitted the scroll as a whole to open a little wider, and a little wider, thus permitting "the mystery of God" to be a little more clearly discerned. And so God's people down through this Gospel age have been privileged to know something of the "secret of the Lord;"—the divine plan. But not until the last seal was broken, did the scroll fly wide open, permitting the "mystery of God" to be fully disclosed; as it is written: "In the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the *mystery of God should be finished*, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets."—Rev. 5:1; 10:7.

This same thought, that God's consecrated people will have intelligence respecting his plans far different from any the world will have, is everywhere kept prominently before us in the Scriptures, and must therefore be considered a very important indication with all who profess to be God's people;—distinguishing whether they are merely his "*servants*," or whether they are still more intimately connected and have received the spirit of adoption as serving "*sons*," and are being treated as sons;—made acquainted with the heavenly Father's plan.

Our text speaks merely of the fear (reverence) of the Lord, but, as we have seen, this reverence *continued* leads into the very deepest work of grace obtainable;—to a fullness of consecration to the Father's will and service. It is of this class who fear (reverence) the Lord that we read,—"They that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared [reverenced] the Lord, and that thought upon his word [esteeming his name, his honor, his will above any earthly, sectarian name or work]. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them [they "shall be accounted worthy to escape" the severity of the great time of trouble with which this age shall end], as a man spareth *his own son* that serveth him." These who reverence the Lord, in this full and Scriptural sense, are surely the Lord's "elect," "the body of Christ," the "overcomers," the "little flock," the "royal priesthood," who shall reign with Christ, and with him bless all the families of the earth in due time.

The privilege of this "royal priesthood" to know "the secret of the Lord," to comprehend "the deep things of God" hidden from others, was beautifully symbolized and typified in the privileges of the Jewish priesthood. When the Tabernacle was set up, with its beautiful golden furniture, lamp stand, table of shew bread, golden altar, etc., all symbolizing spiritual things, they were covered over, hidden, not only from the ordinary Israelite, but even from the Levitical "servants" of the Tabernacle, who were not even permitted to *look therein*. The privilege of seeing those typical secret things, reserved exclusively for the priests, thus typified "the royal priesthood" and their exclusive privilege of understanding the mysteries of God, his Secret.

"HE WILL SHOW THEM HIS COVENANT"

But our text adds, "He will show *them* his covenant." This is stated as though it were a very important matter to see or clearly understand God's Covenant: and it is an important matter, for God's Covenant is really the key to the entire divine plan. What God promised to Abraham in the Covenant, "In thee and in thy seed shall the families of the earth be blessed," included directly and indirectly all the riches of divine grace. Yet, how few see this. We do not say how few of the world see this, for we should not expect any appreciation of the divine Covenant on the part of "them that are without." But we say, How few of those who have named the name of Christ, and nominally stand related to spiritual Israel—how few of these know or care anything whatever about the divine Covenant.

Alas, that Satan should so grossly blind the eyes of so many, that they should have no interest in the divine Covenant and not even know that there is a divine secret or mystery! Satan has gotten them thoroughly imbued with the delusion that God's plan is—that every poor human creature born in sin, shapen in iniquity and schooled more or less in vice and superstition, shall have a few years of very imperfect opportunity to hear one or the other of the many conflicting creeds and theories of Christendom (or a jargon of them all), to thoroughly reform his life and become *a copy of God's dear Son;* and that if he does not succeed in doing these things, with the thousand chances to one against him, he shall be relegated to an eternity of torture. Alas! we say, that Christians should ever conclude that this is the plan of God. Truly, it was an enemy of God (Satan) who put before the people so monstrous, so God-dishonoring a doctrine as this: and persuaded them that this is the length and the breadth, the height and the depth of divine wisdom, and love, and provision for poor fallen humanity.

But with our eyes anointed, and our hearts fully consecrated to the Lord and fully desirous to know just what is his will and his way, we look at the great Covenant, and behold, it opens gloriously before us into three parts: (1) All the families of the earth—every member of the human family is to receive a blessing. (2) The seed of Abraham is to be the *channel* of these divine blessings to every creature. (3) This seed in its primary sense we find meant our Lord Jesus Christ; but in its secondary sense it includes the "bride the Lamb's wife," his joint-heir in this Covenant and in all of the divine mercies. This is clearly set before us by the Apostle in his letter to the Galatians.—3:16, 29.

With this thought in view we realize at once that none of the spiritual blessings of this Covenant were possible until Christ Jesus, the Head of the seed had finished his course and been glorified; and we see that the Lord's work since that time has been the gathering of the "elect" church to be the "bride," the "body of Christ." We see also that the work of blessing cannot begin in its proper sense until this entire "seed" is *complete* and glorified: and that with this glorification of the church with her Lord, in the end or "harvest" of this Gospel age, will come the time mentioned by the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans (8:18, 23), when the "groaning creation" shall be blessed by the "manifestation of the *sons* of God," in the glory of the kingdom. This spiritual seed of Abraham (Christ and the elect church) has indeed been the salt of the earth, throughout the Gospel age, and has helped to preserve the world from utter deterioration; but this is but a small part of the great blessing which God designs to send through the church to the world. The "light" of truth as it has been dimly shining during this night, is properly compared to a candle or lamp, but the "light" of the church glorified in the kingdom during the Millennium is properly represented as "the Sun of righteousness, which shall arise with healing in its beams."

The Covenant then shows us our privilege of the present time, of becoming "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ our Lord, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." And it shows us the object of this trial, the object of this election, the object of the glorification of the church, to be a work of mercy, blessing, helpfulness, toward the remainder of mankind. The Covenant is broad: it does not promise, merely, that all the families of the earth who will be so fortunate as to be living at the time when the seed is complete will receive a blessing; neither does it merely say that all the families proceeding from Abraham, dead and living, will receive a blessing; but comprehensively it promises a blessing to "all the families of the earth,"—those who have fallen asleep in death as well as those who will be alive at the time of the establishment of Christ's kingdom.

To this end our Lord Jesus became Master or "Lord of the *dead:*" he bought *all* with his own precious blood: "He is the propitiation for our sins [the church's sins] and not for ours only, but also *for the sins of the whole world.*" And as we have received a blessing as the result of his ransom, so in God's due time "all the families of the earth" will also receive a blessing because of the *ransom*. It is from this standpoint that the church is called the "first fruits unto God of his creatures,"—not the entire harvest. The first-fruits are to be used of the Lord as his instruments for blessing the remainder.

And in the coming blessing, to the families of the earth, the natural seed of Abraham are to be given a place or preference, a priority over others;—"To the Jew first." As the spiritual blessings were offered to them first, so the earthly favors are to be offered to them first. They shall obtain mercy "through your [the church's] mercy." (Rom. 11:31) And after Israel shall have obtained mercy, a blessing through the glorified spiritual Israel, then in turn natural Israel shall let the light shine upon others—"all the families of the earth;" until in due time the promise shall be fulfilled that Christ as the true Light shall enlighten "*every man that cometh into the world.*" (Jno. 1:9) Oh, glorious covenant! luminous with divine love and wisdom.—Rom. 11:33.

THE COVENANT SURE AND LASTING

And is this Covenant sure? It is sure; as the great Apostle points out, God took special care to so state this Covenant repeatedly to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and to repeat it through the prophets; thus giving us most absolutely his word on this subject. But lest this should not be thought conclusive enough on a subject of so great importance, lest some should fear that there might be a contingency involved, by which that covenant might be vitiated, the Apostle points out that God not only gave his word but also his oath, that its engagements should be strictly fulfilled and in no wise miscarry. He says,—

"God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor to the soul."—Heb. 6:13-19.

"HE IS FAITHFUL WHO HATH PROMISED"

Those who have the "secret of the Lord," and to whom he has not shown the significance of his Covenant should forthwith examine themselves, to see whether or not the fault be unfaithfulness on God's part or failure on their part to come up to God's conditions. They should strictly inquire within whether or not they have been sufficiently and properly reverencing God, or whether their reverence and worship has to any degree been to man and to human institutions, churches, etc.—whether they ever became "servants" of God and, if so, whether they progressed and became servant *sons*.

And those to whom the Lord has disclosed his secret, and the significance of his Covenant, should see to it that these divine favors lead their hearts to still greater reverence for the Lord. For we may be assured that if the reverence is lost the secret will slip from us, and the Covenant become more and more dim. And here we perceive God has placed a great test: He has permitted the great adversary to malign his character, and to traduce his plan, and to misrepresent the teachings of his Word to such an extent that the majority of those who name the name of Christ are at first influenced to turn to the Lord chiefly from fear of eternal torment. Their activities in mission work and in their general Christian course are actuated chiefly by fear and sympathy—sympathy for those whom they esteem to be in danger of eternal torture at the hands of a loveless and unjust God, and fear for themselves, lest they should not be spared a similar fate. Love to God finds no room under such conditions. In fact, it would be impossible for any one to truly love a God of such merciless character. But, amongst those who outgrow their creeds and fears are some who, in opposition to their false instructions, learn to think better of their Creator, and by faith grasp sufficient from his Word to beget a love for him which produces a fullness of consecration to his service; and thus they become sons of God: and then, by entering into divine fellowship through Christ, these have committed to them the "secret of the Lord" and are shown something of his Covenant.

This fullness, however, does not come all at once; it is a gradual development, step by step. If the truth is rightly received it leads onward into more of the truth, and into more of its grace; but if wrongly received, it may lead outward, away from the Lord and his Word, away from his secret, away from his grace, into utter darkness with the world. Nor is it infrequently the case that those who lose their abnormal fears lose practically all their reverence for the Lord, and become careless with reference to his Word, and with reference to their conduct. Such "receive the grace of God in vain;" in some respects, indeed, it does them injury, instead of bringing them blessings.

In our fallen condition we need some strong impellent motive, to enable us to live righteously, soberly, godly in this present evil world. And if the abnormal fear and superstitious dread be removed before a love for God, for righteousness and for truth has been implanted, the probabilities are that the knowledge of God's grace in such will fall upon stony ground. But where the spirit of the Lord has been implanted, where the spirit of the truth, the holy Spirit of love, has begotten to newness of life, where love to the Lord and appreciation of his goodness is the ruling and controlling element of life, there the increase of knowledge of the divine secret and Covenant will bring increasing blessings of heart, of mind and of daily life. (Compare Isa. 29:13; 1 John 4:18) It was for this that the Apostle prayed for the early church, saying,—"That ye might be *able to comprehend* with all saints [the secret of the Lord] the lengths and the breadths, the heights and depths of the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God."—Eph. 3:17-19.

THE BOOK OF THE COVENANT

As we have just seen, the divine blessings are all hidden in the Abrahamic Covenant,—to which were added because of sin the Mosaic (typical) Covenant and its antitype the Covenant in Christ, the New Covenant sealed with his blood.

The Bible is the great Book of these Covenants. And it like every other feature is considerably hidden, obscured, to the natural man; and its deeper and grander presentations can be seen only through the vail of types and shadows, parables and symbols. And the privilege to look beyond this vail, and to grasp the spirit of the truth, is reserved in large degree for the class mentioned in our text foregoing:—"The secret of the Lord is with them that reverence him, and he will show them his Covenant."

To this class—them that fear the Lord and have his secret and know his Covenant—the Bible becomes a chart of the ages, which shows not only the coast lines and rocks and sand bars of the six thousand years of evil, but also the blessed port then to be reached, and the glorious land of blessing and righteousness and divine favor—the thousand years of Christ's Millennial reign.

To this same class the Bible is a compass also, which, in connection with the chart, indicates to them the divinely directed route, by which they are to *escape* certain troubles coming upon the world, and by which they are to *obtain* certain trials and experiences which will be valuable to them in fitting and preparing them to be joint-heirs with Christ in the kingdom. Without this compass they might indeed be able to judge in clear weather of some portions of the route, but never satisfactorily: and in times of storm and darkness, sun, moon and stars obscured, these, like the world, would be left to the mercy of their own imperfect judgments as to which way to steer, and would feel all the trepidation and uncertainty which so many others feel, were it not for their compass. But the compass can be seen, and its directions followed, however dark or obscure the natural light; and following its directions the Lord's people are to attain unto their high calling—make their calling and election sure.

The Lord's Word, in the hands of this same class, may be compared to a telescope, whose properly adjusted lenses represent the bringing into harmony of the human will with the divine will, in Christ. Careful adjustment is required that we may get a proper focus; but when this condition is obtained, wonderful things through the Bible we see. The far off and indistinct promises are brought nigh, made clear and plain. Hitherto unseen features of the divine character and plan are made manifest; and by the aid of this Telescope the lengths and breadths, the heights and the depths of divine wisdom and love and power may be much more closely approximated by our finite minds.

To this same class the Bible is also a microscope. The proper adjustment of its lenses—the complete consecration of the human will to the divine—brings to bear upon all the *little* affairs of life a power which magnifies them, and shows us their importance as never seen by us before, and as cannot be seen by the world in general. Through the Bible as a microscope, we can see that all the trifling affairs of the present life are potentialities, which, under divine direction, are working together for good to "the called ones according to his purpose." It *magnifies* the law of God, shows us how grand, how sublimely perfect and altogether reasonable, is every requirement of God. It shows us that the weaknesses and imperfections which hinder us from measuring up to the standard of that perfect law are inherited from father Adam. It shows us that the blemish of sin has affected not only our physical systems, but also our mental and moral faculties; and thus it points out to us that our own reasoning on every subject requires to be re-adjusted and harmonized with the spirit of the divine law; and thus it enables us by such mental and moral adjustment to obtain what the Apostle calls "the spirit of a sound mind." It not only shows us what we could not see before of our own shortcomings, but graciously it indicates also how after coming into Christ and being covered with his robe of righteousness by faith, we may to some extent make up for these deficiencies by adding to our faith fortitude, and to fortitude knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control patience, and to patience piety, and to piety brotherly-kindness, and to brotherly-kindness love, which things, as they more and more abound, will incite us to cultivate fruitfulness, in the use of the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.—2 Pet. 1:5-8.

In view of the blessings attached let us strive more and more to retain and to cultivate that true *reverence* for the Lord, which is not only the beginning of wisdom but also its

end; that through it we may have the benefit and helpful assistance of all the gracious provisions which God has made for the progress of those who love him, in knowledge and in character; that in due time, if we faint not, we may inherit the promises and share the glories of our Father and our Lord.

LENDING TO THE LORD

SEPTEMBER 5.—2 COR. 9:1-11.

"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, tho he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich."—2 Cor. 8:9.

Our lesson inculcates Christian benevolence—alms giving. It is addressed to the Corinthian Christians and is on behalf of Christians in and about Jerusalem. A question arises why collections should be made for the Christians at Jerusalem more than for the Christians at Corinth. There were three reasons: (1 A severe famine had prevailed in the vicinity of Jerusalem. (2) Jerusalem was not a commercial city, and therefore money was less plentiful. (3) It would appear that the classes who received the gospel in and about Jerusalem were chiefly the poor, and we can readily judge from the open persecutions of the truth there that there was also a great deal of quiet opposition to all who sympathized with the gospel of Christ. As small shop people they were probably boycotted; and as laborers they probably were as far as possible rejected except as necessity might demand their services. On the contrary, the cities of Greece, Macedonia and Asia-Minor were prosperous; and as far as we may judge the class of society which accepted the gospel was in many cases the better element.

This was indicated in our last lesson by the statement that the "chiefs of Asia" dissuaded Paul from going before the people at the colosseum. These chiefs of Asia were generally quite wealthy and prominent men. We remember also in the same lesson the fact that the books of magic, which were burned after the owners had accepted Christ, represented a very large amount of money. Probably, therefore, their owners were correspondingly wealthy. We remember also the favorable decision of the town clerk at Ephesus; and the fact that Tyrannus was so in sympathy with the Apostle's teaching as to permit the use of his schoolroom. We recall the conversion of Sergius, Paulus, the deputy governor, at Paphos; also Dionysius, one of the professors in Mars Hill college at Athens; and Damaris of the same city; and Justus of Corinth; and Crispus, chief ruler of the synagogue in the same city.

The question naturally arises, Why should the same Gospel attract the well-to-do and middle classes in Greece and Asia-Minor and Thessalonica, and attract few outside the poorer class at Jerusalem? The answer would seem to be (1) that among the Jews who had long been acquainted with the true God, the true religion and the gracious promises of the Messiah, a *religious pride* had developed, especially amongst the wealthy and the learned. And because their religious system was in advance of every other religious system in the world, the learned attributed a like superiority to themselves individually—they "trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others."

This was the secret of Israel's being "blinded" to the Gospel. The leaders and theologians were so self-conscious, and relied so implicitly upon their interpretations of the divine promises as centering in themselves, that they could not regard the humble Nazarene and his unlearned followers except as impostors. And when, later, the gospel began to be preached to the Gentiles their opposition was increased; for it was utterly contrary to every thought of their religious pride that God would accept either the humble Jews or the Gentiles to his favor, and reject themselves, the leading representatives of his cause and work.

But amongst the Gentiles the case was very different: while the illiterate masses were firmly bound in the superstition of their various religions, those who were of an honest mind among the better educated were quick to discern that many of the features of their own religions were superstitions merely. They had probably, previously, been somewhat attracted to the Jewish religion as being much more reasonable than their own, as we find that the Gentiles readily resorted to the Jewish synagogues; but the Jewish religion would necessarily be unsatisfactory to them since it would appear to be very narrow, limiting the divine blessings in a special manner to Israelites—a people whom they considered rather inferiors in the arts at that time. But, the Gospel, throwing wide open the door to those who desired righteousness, truth and goodness, of every nation, people, kindred and tongue, would naturally commend itself to the class we describe as being the most reasonable explanation of the Jewish doctrines and their grand eventual outcome, and long hidden meaning.

At all events, the saints at Jerusalem were poorer than were the saints at Corinth. It was therefore appropriate that the Apostle should suggest to the latter the propriety of sending a gift to the former. Living at a time when the conveniences for transferring money were very inferior to the very poorest known today, the only possible method seemed to be that the various congregations should send their gifts at the hand of the Apostle when he would go to Jerusalem the following year. And Paul's words intimate that the suggestion made by him nearly a year before, to the Corinthian brethren, had been well received, and the collections zealously entered upon. For this reason it was "superfluous" for him to write in this connection particulars respecting the necessity for and propriety of this collection; but he hints to them that there was a bare possibility that the work zealously begun a year before might not have been patiently carried out, and that after he had boasted somewhat to others of their love and zeal for the Lord, he would regret if coming to them, enroute to Jerusalem, it should be found that after all they had failed to have their donation ready.

In his previous epistle to the Corinthians he had suggested methodical charity, saying, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given instructions to the churches at Galatia, even so do ye. On the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God has prospered him, that there be no gathering when I come."

It was the Apostle's experience, as it is the experience of all thoughtful people, that systematic charity is better than spasmodic charity: not only is the result generally larger, but the influence upon the giver is more beneficial: it keeps an object before the mind, a service to be rendered as unto the Lord. And with many the opportunity for serving the Lord's cause with money is almost the only opportunity for service. Of course, where a consecrated child of God can do so it is far better that he should give to the saints after the manner of Paul and his traveling associates—giving spiritual gifts and blessings, either by public preaching, or by house to house visiting: presenting the truth either by the printed page or by tongue or both.

But there are others so circumstanced in life through lack of talent, or strength, or opportunity (hindered by prior mortgages upon their time—family obligations) that practically their only chance for serving the Lord and manifesting their love for him is through their gifts to his cause and to his people. For such to be deprived of the opportunity of exercising themselves in the Lord's service in this manner either through a lack of a cause needing their assistance, or through lack of instruction respecting this method of divine service, would be to deprive them of an important opportunity of service, and correspondingly to deprive them of the blessings which always follow every service to the Lord, whatever its character.

We notice, therefore, that the Apostle felt very free to recommend to the church the grace of giving and to even press upon them the fact that their liberality *in proportion* to their ability, would in a large degree be an index of their love for the Lord and the gospel. But, here we note in contrast, that the same Apostle did not ask alms of these believers when first they received the Lord's grace; lest they should in any manner get the impression that the Gospel was being preached from mercenary motives—for lucre's sake. Accordingly, we find that rather than mention money the Apostle preached to these very same Corinthian brethren for more than a year without a suggestion as to remuneration; laboring with his own hands at his trade of tent-making, rather than be chargeable to any. He reminds them of this later on in this same epistle.—2 Cor. 11:7-9.

Let us note also the change which the full appreciation of the Gospel wrought upon the believers at Corinth. At first they were so negligent of their privilege that seemingly they never thought of volunteering financial assistance to the Apostle while he was serving them by the labor of his own hands, and receiving some assistance from believers in other places. But, after the grace of God entered more fully into their hearts and they began to appreciate the value of the truth which they had received,—that it had brought them

priceless blessings of hope and joy and faith and character—they had a zeal, a "forwardness" to do something financially in the Lord's service. And now that the Apostle was absent from them, and after his course had proved to them that he sought not their money but themselves, to do them good; he felt free to draw their attention to the great blessing that would come from liberality in the Lord's cause in proportion to their ability and love.

Urging this matter he gave them a parable, saying, "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully." And this reminds us of the proverb, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is proper, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." (Prov. 11:24, 25) The evident lesson is that the Lord is pleased to see his people cultivate breadth of heart as well as breadth of mind;—generosity in proportion to their knowledge of him and his generosity.

The Scriptures nowhere declare that cases of absolute privation amongst the Lord's people are proofs that at some time in their past lives when possessed of means they failed to use a portion of it in charity, in the Lord's service; but the inspired words above quoted come very close to giving this lesson. At all events, it is profitable that we lay this testimony to heart and that each child of God henceforth shall be earnestly careful that out of the blessings of the Lord coming to us all from day to day some measure be carefully, prayerfully and lovingly laid aside as seed to be sown in the Lord's service according to the best wisdom and judgment which he will give us. How many have that carefulness for themselves either in using every penny as fast as it comes, or in being so interested in laying by for the outworking of future plans, that they feel they can spare nothing for charity. How many such can afterward see that they made a great mistake, when their accumulations suddenly vanished, either by reason of sickness or accident or bank failure or what not; and how then they have good reason to regret that they sowed no "seed" after the manner described by the Apostle in the sixth verse of our lesson.

Our Lord showed us how he measures our gifts; that he esteems them not according to the amount given, but chiefly according to the spirit which prompts the gift, when he drew attention to the poor widow who cast in two mites into the Lord's treasury. Our Lord declared that from the standpoint of his estimation the poor widow had cast in a larger sum than any of the wealthy who had given merely out of their abundance, and not to such an extent that they felt it. How many of the Lord's people would be more "fat" spiritually today, if they would give attention to the exercise of this talent, this opportunity for service, we cannot say; the Lord only knows. But this lesson makes it incumbent upon us to point out a privilege in this direction which is within the reach of the very poorest.

Very seldom is it necessary to caution people against over-much giving; yet in some instances such caution is proper, and in some instances in Scripture giving has been restrained. No one should give to the extent of causing privation to those dependent upon him. Nor should any one give to such an extent as to bring upon him financial bankruptcy and cause losses to others. The apostolic rule for giving we have quoted above. The laying by should be in general, "according as the Lord hath prospered him." The degree of our prosperity should be the measure of our charities. "The spirit of a sound mind" is inculcated by the Scriptures, upon this as upon every subject.

"The Lord loveth a cheerful giver." And gifts in any other spirit than a cheerful one might just as well not be given: they will bring no blessing. The Lord does not appreciate such giving: it has no "sweet odor" in his estimation. The gift, to be appreciated of the Lord, must be a thank-offering, prompted by a realization of a debt of everlasting gratitude, to him from whom cometh every good and every perfect gift. And to such, the Apostle assures us, "God is able to make all things abound." All who give anything in the divine service, time, talent, strength, money or influence—any or all of these—will find themselves proportionately abounding in the different graces; because such are in the right attitude of heart to grow in grace.

But, the Apostle seems to imply further that such will have "sufficiency in all things" as well as be able to "abound in every good work." In thinking of sufficiency in any direction the condition of the mind must be taken into account. Sufficiency may not mean luxury and every comfort, but "all sufficiency" is gained always where there is "godliness with contentment." In proof that he is inculcating no new theory respecting the divine care over those who are seeking to scatter to others a portion of the blessings that come to them, temporal or spiritual, the Apostle quotes from the Psalms.—112:9.

When in the last verse the Apostle speaks of "being enriched in everything," we are not to understand him to mean that the Lord's people will all be enriched financially. The Apostle himself was an example of how the Lord's people do not become wealthy. He is speaking rather of the enrichment of the heart, as he says in another place, speaking of himself and co-laborers in the Gospel work: We are "as poor, but making many rich;"—rich in hope, rich in faith, rich in love and all the various graces which these imply.

Our Golden Text reminds us of the grandest example of self-denial in the interest of others on record—the gift by our Lord Jesus of himself for the world. He was rich in the possession of the spiritual nature and its honors and glory, yet for our sakes he became poor, taking the human nature that he might redeem us; and to this end he surrendered even life itself at Calvary, that through his sacrifice we might become rich;—become possessed of divine favor, and the riches of divine grace in Christ; even joint-heirship with him who is now our exalted Lord at the right hand of divine Majesty. But to attain this joint-heirship with him, we must study to be like him, to have his Spirit; and like him desirous of sharing whatever he may give us of either temporal or spiritual favors with others, particularly the "household of faith;"—either to feed or clothe it, spiritually or temporarily, as circumstances may dictate. "The liberal soul shall be made fat."

LIVING THE NEW LIFE

SEPT. 12.—ROM. 12:9-21.

"Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good."—Rom. 12:21.

While the Apostle Paul was a wonderful logician, and in his writings has set forth the elements of Christian faith along doctrinal lines more than any other apostle, yet we notice that he is in pursuit of a certain object: he is not beating the air, not discussing theological points for the sake of making an argument or showing his own ability. His arguments along doctrinal lines lead the reader in every instance onward and upward, as a stairway, to a grand upper room of perfected Christian character: and nowhere is this more manifest than in his epistle to the Romans. Beginning with the distinctions between the Jew, informed respecting God, and to some extent respecting his will and his plan, and contrasting these with the general ignorance prevailing amongst all classes of Gentiles, "without God and having no hope in the world," he carries the mind forward, pointing out how the degradation had come, and how the knowledge of God had reached Israel first, not because Israelites were better, but because of the divine favor, "grace," "election."

He points out nevertheless that "the law made nothing perfect," but was merely a pedagogue (a servant whose business it was to take children to school); thus the law was to bring Israel to Christ, the great Teacher, that they might learn of him. He points out further that, while Israel was seeking divine favor, they failed to get the chief blessing because they were not thoroughly candid with themselves, and hence mistook the mission of Moses' Law. They hypocritically claimed that they kept that Law inviolate and were entitled to its blessings,—eternal life, etc.,—whereas they should have admitted that the law was so grand and so perfect, and themselves so fallen from perfection, that they were unable to keep it; and they should have looked to the Lord for help. In this attitude of mind they would have been ready to receive eternal life as a *gift*, through Jesus Christ our Lord; and would have given up seeking it by the perfection of their own works. So the Apostle points out that Israel failed because they sought the blessing not by faith but by works. Thus "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." (Rom. 11:7) He then points out that this fall of Israel into blindness and the calling of a peculiar people from among the Gentiles to complete the "elect" company was foreknown of God and declared by him through the prophets. (Rom. 9 and 10) But he shows that Israel is not cast off forever, and that when the elect class is complete all Israel shall be *saved*

from the blindness into which they stumbled in the rejection of Christ; and that their recovery then will be the signal for blessings upon the whole world.—Rom. 11:15, 25, 32.

It is after eleven chapters of argumentative, logical, beautiful, instructive, blessed reasoning that the Apostle reaches the crown of his argument, saying (12:1), "I beseech you *therefore*, brethren, by the mercies of God [presented in the previous eleven chapters] that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service." He is addressing the "elect" body of Christ, of which a part was being gathered from among the Jews and the remainder being made up from those called from among the Gentiles. These should know what are the terms and conditions upon which God hath "called" them; *viz.*, (1) to suffer with Christ in this present time, and (2) to be glorified and reign with him in the coming age, to bless the world. These should know the reason for their sufferings and the character which God would develop in them, and without which they would not be "fit for the kingdom." It is concerning some of these characteristics, necessary to those who would make their "calling and election sure," that our present lesson treats.

"Let love be without dissimulation." He had already explained the necessity for love; but he now puts us on guard against a merely feigned love, which would only outwardly appear kind and polite. The true spirit of love, a holy spirit, will not be a dissimulating one, a hypocritical one: the love will be genuine, heartfelt as well as mouth expressed. This love is to be toward God, and toward all in proportion as they are God-like, or striving to be so. It is to be a love of that which is good, right, pure, true.

"Abhor that which is evil." We are not merely to avoid doing that which is evil, not merely to have no love or affinity for evil; but more than these we are to hate, to abhor evil. And as the love for God and for all things true and pure and making for righteousness is to be cultivated, so the abhorrence of sin and impurity of every kind is to be cultivated, so that the stronger we become in Christian character the more intense will be our love for the good and pure and true, and the more intense will be our opposition to the untrue, the impure, the sinful. The more we learn of the beautiful harmonies of this heavenly grace of love, and the more they become the melodies of our own hearts, the more distressing and repugnant and abhorrent will sin and selfishness, "the spirit of the World," be to us: just as discords in music grate upon our ears in proportion as our knowledge and appreciation of musical harmonies grows. As holiness and sin are opposites, so our feelings toward these must be represented by the sentiments of love and hatred. To grow cool in love for righteousness, is to lose some of the abhorrence for sin. Let us therefore cultivate in ourselves hatred for sin, selfishness impurity and every evil way, that we may find it the easier to cultivate in our hearts the beautiful graces of the holy spirit.

"Cleave to that which is good." The thought is, adhere to, be cemented to, that which is good. There is a constant tendency not only from our own fallen natures, but also from the world and the devil, to separate from that which is good and pure and noble. And we must resolutely determine, that at all hazards and for all time, by the Lord's grace, we will adhere to him,—the truth, the way, the life.

"Be kindly affectioned." The thought here seems to be: Cultivate among yourselves that kind of affection which properly belongs in a family, where the blessing or honor of one member signifies the blessing, honor and advancement of all. Perhaps the Apostle thus delicately suggests the impropriety of any manifestation of affection except such as would be proper between brethren: as we read in another place, "Love as brethren."—1 Pet. 3:8.

"In honor preferring one another." That is, rejoicing more if honor come to another than if it had come to self. Our hearts should be so unselfish that we would take pleasure in seeing honor and prosperity come to another, and rejoice in it: and so sympathetic that a brother's failure would cause us as much chagrin as if it were our own failure. This is the holy spirit which unfeignedly rejoices with those who rejoice, and weeps with those who weep.

"Not slothful in your affairs." The word here does not refer specially to mercantile business, but to affairs in general. The class addressed, who are seeking to make their calling and election sure, are to "do all things as unto the Lord;" and nothing done for the Lord should be done in a slovenly manner. We are in a world full of opportunities for good or evil: there are few on our side, the side of God and of righteousness; and whoever realizes this, and is fully consecrated to the Lord, will certainly be aroused from slothfulness which is natural to many in the fallen condition. If the battle of truth against error, of light against darkness, does not awaken us to energy in the Lord's service, it marks an unfavorable condition of heart. And to the consecrated child of God, every affair of life—eating, drinking and all other business in this present life—is to help us to serve the interests of our Master's cause.

"Fervent in spirit." This is placed in contrast with sloth: if as stewards of divine mercy and truth we are slothful, it is because we are cool in our love to the Lord; hence the Apostle's instruction that we should be hot, fervent in spirit. The Greek word here translated "fervent" signifies to be hot, to boil. We are reminded of our Lord's words to the church of Laodicea, boastful of its works but luke-warm in the spirit of its love. "I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would that thou wert cold or hot. So then, because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth." Let all who have received the Lord's Spirit take heed lest they get into a lukewarm condition and lose the Lord's favor: let them cultivate rather a growing appreciation of the mercies of God, which growing appreciation as fuel will add fervency to our love and zeal for his truth, and for purity in our own hearts, and for service to others.

"Rejoice in hope." We are not to expect to have much in the present life to rejoice in, if we are faithful to our "calling;" because, "through much tribulation shall ye enter the kingdom." Our rejoicing is to be in *hope*—looking into the future. The eye of faith is to see what the natural eye cannot see, the crown of life and all the glorious things "which God hath in *reservation* for them that love him [fervently]." And here is the advantage of doctrinal knowledge: it inspires hope; it gives a foundation for hope. Knowledge cannot bring us to the kingdom; but it may be a great help in building us up and preparing us for it, by constantly holding before us the *hopes* which God designs should stimulate and encourage us while running the race for the great prize.

"Patient in tribulation." Our word tribulation is derived from the Latin *tribulum*, the name of a roller or threshing machine used in olden times for cleaning wheat, removing from it the outer husk or chaff. How appropriate the thought when applied to the Lord's consecrated people, who in the Scriptures are symbolized by wheat. Our new natures are the kernel, the real grain: yet this treasure or valuable part is covered with the husk of earthly conditions. And in order that the wheat may be made properly ready for the "garner" and for usefulness, it is necessary that each grain shall pass through the tribulation necessary to separate those qualities which, until separated, render us unfit for the future service to which we are called of the Lord. In proportion as we are able to realize our own imperfections, and the perfect will of God concerning us, we will be enabled to bear patiently, and even with a certain kind of rejoicing, all the tribulations which the Master shall see best to let come upon us. "We glory in tribulations also."—Rom. 5:3.

"Instant in prayer." No advice that the Apostle could give to the class addressed could be more vitally important than this.

"Ah, whither could we flee for aid when tempted, desolate, dismayed?
Or how the hosts of sin defeat had suffering saints no mercy-seat!"

Prayer, communion with God, is indispensably necessary to our spiritual welfare; and the appreciation of the privilege of communion with the Most High and with our Redeemer, or the lack of such appreciation, as the case may be, indicates tolerably clearly our fervency or our coldness with reference to the things of the Lord. People may be fervent in serving schemes or plans of their own, or human systems and theories, and have little desire for prayer; but those who serve the Lord and his truth from a hot, fervent heart, will so realize their imperfection and their own inability in the divine service, that they will desire and will continually seek the Master's guidance and direction with reference to the service they are rendering to him.

If, therefore, we ever feel a growing indifference, either to private prayer or to public worship or to social prayer-meetings, we may be assured that it is a very dangerous sign of one or two things. (1) Either that our love is growing cold, or (2) that our love is misplaced, misdirected, placed upon some earthly scheme or ambition, and is not fervent toward the Lord. And whichever is found to be the difficulty should be corrected at once. The appreciation of prayer, like the growth of love, and like the increase of fervency of spirit, is a matter for development; and the best fuel, as above sug-

gested, is the consideration of the divine mercies already enjoyed.

"Distributing to the distresses of saints." The Greek word here rendered "distributing" signifies *to make common.* The thought evidently is, that although Communism is not encouraged in Scripture, nor is it the best method in this present time, while it is better that each should have the responsibility largely for his own affairs and be the steward of his own talents, nevertheless that feeling of brotherhood is to prevail amongst the saints, which would *"make common"* to others of the spiritual family, such things as are necessities to them. Love, not selfishness, is to control.

"Given to hospitality." The Apostle's language here does not signify *if requested* we should not be inhospitable; but it means much more: literally, it signifies following after hospitality—going out after, or seeking for opportunities for the exercise of hospitality. This principle is as applicable to the poor as to the rich. If what we have is plain or common, the hospitable use of it will just as truly show our heart-intentions as though it were the best. Some, we fear, fail to cultivate this grace; and if they exercise hospitality are inclined to give better than they have, and perhaps would go into debt in order to entertain more lavishly than their circumstances would justify. This is wrong. It is not cultivating the grace which the Apostle here inculcates, but is cultivating a very evil weed,—pride. Let us learn not only to love without dissimulation, but also to follow after hospitality without dissimulation, without seeking to show off better conditions than are really ours.

"Bless them which persecute you." This is a quotation from the sermon on the mount. It addresses a mind enlightened by the divine Word, that has thus drawn against it the opposition of Satan, and of those whose understandings he has darkened. It means an opposition of persecution not for wrong-doing, or as busy-bodies in other men's matters, or for nonsensical peculiarities, but persecution for the truth's sake. It implies a heart full of love and sympathy and pity; for no other heart could really and truly bless its persecutors and wish them no evil, but good. This is the kind of heart, overflowing with the holy spirit of the Lord, that is able to rejoice with those in prosperity, to weep with those who sorrow and even able to forget its own tribulations or adversities.

"Be of the same disposition toward each one." Be sympathetic toward the very humblest brother or sister as well as toward the most refined. *"Mind not high things."* Do not allow your affections and sentiments merely to go out along ecstatic lines, but bring your mind down so as to enter into sympathy with those of God's people who financially and intellectually are in a low estate.

"Be not wise in your own conceits." This is a further injunction to humility. Those who are always minding high things and overlooking the humbler ones of the Lord's people usually do so because of too high an opinion of their own wisdom and intelligence. Few things more blemish an otherwise developed Christian character than a conceit which separates him or her from the humblest of the Lord's flock. Moreover, there is no more dangerous thing than such an opinion of one's own wisdom. This condition is described as being "heady," "high minded." It naturally leads into error, and to a fall from both the letter and spirit of the truth. "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." Let all beware of this terrible disease. Nothing is a greater hindrance and stumbling block to the ministers of the nominal churches today (hindering them from receiving the truth) than this kind of pride in their own wisdom, which leads to and is distinguished by the unscriptural division of believers into "clergy" and "laity." And there is equal and even greater danger along this line for those who have received present truth, and who are seeking to minister it to others. Let all of the Lord's people, especially those who have a little more knowledge, and who attempt to make known the riches of divine grace, be specially on guard against attacks of the enemy from this quarter.

"Recompense no man evil for evil." Much of the previous instruction of this lesson relates to our dealings with the brotherhood; but here the Apostle points out a general line of conduct toward all men. There is a general tendency on the part of well-intentioned people to recognize a line of justice and a desire to vindicate justice and to punish evil doers. The Apostle points out that this is not the rule governing the Lord's family. It is not improper for the world to have laws and regulations for criminals, in the interest of society; and the Apostle is not discussing those, nor finding fault with them. He is treating rather of the minor affairs of life in which various evils may be inflicted and resented without coming directly under the control of civil laws. The policy of the Christian is to be not along the lines of slothfulness, animosities, revenges and perpetual conflicts, but to the contrary of all this; because of his greater knowledge of how sin came into the world, and how all mankind are fallen mentally, morally and physically, and how God has sympathy with the poor groaning creation and has provided a ransom for all, and that in due time a restitution for all shall be possible. And he is to have a heart so full of sympathy with this plan, that he will be generous, and God-like, toward the sin-blinded ones—anxious chiefly for the opening of the eyes of their understandings, and for an opportunity of blessing and helping them, rather than entertaining feelings of revenge.

"Provide things honest in the sight of all men." Realizing that part of the service which the Lord requires of him is an honest provision for the necessities of himself and family, the true Christian will seek to live up to this reasonable requirement. If he cannot obtain employment at that which he prefers, he will be bound in honesty to take some other employment, in order to meet his obligations. Few things are more likely to bring dishonor upon God's people in the sight of the world than dishonesty. Of course, none of the saints would steal; but there is another way of being dishonest, which seems to slip by many consciences under certain circumstances. This is the dishonesty of purchasing on credit by actually or impliedly promising a payment at no distant date when there are no assurances of ability to pay at that date, as the merchant is led to presume. Some indeed seem to encourage themselves in such dishonest methods, persuading themselves that they are exercising "faith" in God, that he will provide means for the payment of their debts. This is a great mistake. God has never authorized any one to go into debt for him, and such a faith has no backing in God's Word. On the contrary, he instructs his people not to go into debt; but he says, "Owe no man anything." A good plan is to always live within our income and, if possible, to "lay by in store that we may have to give to him that needeth."

"Live as peaceably with all men as lieth within the range of your possibilities." With the various crooked natures of the world, and with our own imperfect dispositions (more and more coming under control of grace however) it will be a difficult matter to avoid all friction. But while in the interest of peace we are to submit to trifling wrongs and injustices with good grace, yet there is a place where we must draw the line; a place where our desire for peace must not control; that is, whenever a principle is involved. Here is a great difficulty: those who are naturally peaceable, will be tempted to pursue peace even at the expense of principle, and in conflict with the divine commands; on the other hand, many of those who are firmest in defense of righteous principles are inclined to be combative, and have great need to guard themselves and to cultivate this disposition for peace, which is a part of the divine character which we are to copy. The rule should be, "First pure [truthful and loyal to righteousness], then peaceable."—James 3:17.

Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves; but preferably get out of the way of your opponents and their wrath, remembering that it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Hence we do not need to feel that justice needs to be vindicated at our hands. God will take care of the vindication of his own justice. If it were left in our hands to mete out justice to those who mistreat us and say all manner of evil against us falsely for Christ's sake, we would doubtless make many mistakes. We should therefore be glad that the matter is not in our hands at present, and that divine wisdom and justice will repay to evil doers with greater mercy than we would probably be able to exercise. Our feelings, therefore, should be largely those of sympathy and pity for wrong doers, remembering that surely either in the present life or in that which is to come a man shall reap according to his present sowing.

For these reasons and in order to cultivate in us more of the divine mind, we are instructed to be kind to our enemies and not to see them want for necessities of life. Such treatment will be more likely than any other to do them good, and to win them as friends. We are not, however, to treat them kindly in order to see how badly we can make them feel under it. We are to treat them kindly because love is the principle of our nature, the "new commandment" of our Lord and Master, the holy spirit which is more and more actuating us. We are to treat them thus, regardless of whether we ever melt them by our kindness in the present life or not.

"Be not overcome of evil." We are to remember that there is a constant conflict between good and evil, that each has its servants, or soldiers, and that we have enlisted on the side of good, under the Captain of our salvation, with the engagement that we will "fight a good fight." We are never, therefore, to take up or to use evil words or methods or manners. To do so is temporarily to join the enemy, or to admit that his implements and methods are better than those of the Captain to whom we belong. To answer anger with anger, evil report with evil report, bitter words with bitter words, slander with slander, persecution with persecution, blow with blow, or any of these, would be to endeavor to overcome evil with evil. This which is natural to our fallen natures is what we are commanded to avoid, that we may the more thoroughly cultivate the new nature. To be misled by the adversary to use his methods in any of these ways is to be overcome of evil.

"Overcome evil with good." The fact that the Lord so directs us is proof (1) that it is practicable and (2) that it is preferable. Faith accepts these declarations of divine wisdom on the subject; and experience endorses or ratifies them. Whoever has tried, has found that evil can be overcome with good, in many instances. Not infrequently, however, all the good that you can do in return for evil will work no change in the evil-doer; he goes on in his evil way, is more insistent, and more intolerant. Nevertheless, the course of the Lord's people cannot vary; they are authorized to do only good, and to keep on doing good whether it shall melt the opposition or not. In this, we are but following the divine example. God causes the rain to fall upon the crops of the good and of the evil; he causes the sunshine to come indiscriminately, upon the just and the unjust. "His tender mercies are over all his works." And even by and by, when his vengeance shall be exercised, it will still be in love and kindness; (1) that those who will may be benefited by the discipline of trouble, and (2) that those who will not benefit may be destroyed from among the people; to the end that their baneful influence may be removed forever. Let us all more and more seek to live the new life. "If any man be in Christ, he is new creature."

INTERESTING LETTERS

MR. M. L. MCPHAIL, *Illinois.*

DEAR FRIEND AND BROTHER:—It was through a recent letter received from Mr. C. T. Russell that I obtained your name and address. And I now take pleasure in penning you a few lines.

You do not know—O yes! I think *you* do,—but certainly only a few can know, what exceeding blessedness has come to me through my brief acquaintance with Mr. Russell and his works. And how I long for more!

I am a middle-aged man of 40. I was brought up a Christian from my mother's knee.

Eleven years ago (about), I lost my sweet wife, after a marriage of 2½ years. She was a devoted Christian, so good, so beautiful, so true; for her sweet sake I could willingly have died. But God took her from me, leaving me with no children, no cares, but a crushed spirit, a broken heart and almost a rebellious inclination. But these extremities set me to thinking as I had never thought before.

I have long felt that Christian religion ought to be a great deal more or a great deal less than that usually presented either by pen or pulpit. I accordingly went into the ministry in the Methodist church. And while I enjoyed working for my Master according to my limited knowledge and ability, I learned to feel more and more that the Methodist church did not mean business: did not believe what it presented nor try to present what it did believe.

After working hard for 2½ years I was obliged to stop from nervous prostration. And really, the teaching of this church is enough to prostrate the nerves of anybody who is honest enough to work consistently in harmony with such views. Thus I left the pulpit: but I could not leave off thinking. Last winter I advertised in the *Chicago Record* for truth, thus,—

PERSONAL NOTICE.

Correspondence wanted from any one who is a candidate for absolute and abstract truth. Address: Box 142, ——, Ill.

This ad was echoed and enlarged by the *Tribune*, and I received many answers: among them VOL. I. of MILLENNIAL DAWN, a copy of the WATCH TOWER and "What Say the Scriptures about Hell?" These were sent me by a brother Dixon, of Iowa, and this was the first that I ever heard of the good people at Allegheny. But I have feasted on it since that time.

Then it was, upon inquiry concerning who and how many accepted this interpretation of the Word, that I learned of the little band so near as Chicago. Now it so happens that I expect to spend two or three days in Chicago some time in September (perhaps before the middle). I have a number of friends in and near the city, and I think I would like to meet some of you people and have a nice long talk with you personally, if it be agreeable to you.

I am yours in Christ, R. W. LOVERING.

California.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Quite accidentally, the other day, I became acquainted with a miner, returned to these parts from Alaska. He has done fairly well there.

I found that he did not believe in "One word of the Bible, not one word from beginning to end of the book!" I told him there was a surprise in store for him, and gave him two TOWERS and lent him VOL. I. of MILLENNIAL DAWN. A few days after, I saw him again, before he had finished VOL. I., and he said: "I am going back to Alaska early in March, and want to take all those books with me!" I am sure he is now well on the road to grasp the truth.

Will these be the first of the DAWNS to go to the Arctic Circle? If so please let the TOWER readers know that Mr. Walker has the honor of God to bear the light manifested at the close of the Gospel age into the Arctic regions.

Yours very truly, ALFRED R. PEARSON.

Tennessee.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—I write you that you may know how the Lord's few are getting along at this place. We have had six meetings from place to place since I wrote you last, and had a soul-refreshing time at each gathering. But as our homes are so scattered over the neighborhood that house to house meetings are very inconvenient, I have fitted up a good house on my place, at the edge of our little town, to be used as a meeting house for God's people. Tomorrow will be our first gathering at our new meeting place. I pray the Lord may bless us in our effort.

Last Saturday the Baptist church, which is three miles from here, held a meeting in which they proposed to discuss among themselves what they call the Russell doctrine. The questions were asked through a question box. Three important questions—"To what extent does the atonement reach?" "How far does the Redemption extend?" "Is there to be a restitution of all things?"—were assigned to one Burl. Henry, said to be the ablest minister in the Baptist Northern Association. Mr. Henry answered those three questions in broad terms as taught in the MILLENNIAL DAWN. Then they all rose up and told Mr. Henry that he would have to stop advocating such doctrine, or they would turn him out of the church; but Mr. Henry frankly told them that he did not care if they did turn him out of their church, that they could not stop him from preaching this Gospel of the kingdom, except they stopped his breath. Thus it is, one by one, they keep coming as the Lord's sheep to his bountiful provisions.

Yours in Love and Christian fellowship.

G. E. TOLIVER.

SCATTER SEEDS OF KINDNESS

"Loving words will cost but little,
Journeying up the hill of life;
But they make the weak and weary
Stronger, braver for the strife.
Do you count them only trifles?
What to earth are sun and rain?
Never was a kind word wasted;
Never one was said in vain.

"So as up life's hill we journey,
Let us scatter all the way
Kindly words, to be as sunshine
In the dark and cloudy day.
Grudge no loving word, my brother,
As along through life you go,
To the ones who journey with you;
If you love them, tell them so."

VIEWS FROM THE WATCH TOWER

Well has the Prophet described our times, saying, "The great day of the Lord is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the *voice* [sound] of the day of the Lord." (Zeph. 1:14) He who cannot hear the "voice" today is deaf indeed: "He that hath an ear let him hear," saith the Lord. The "voice" of complaint for some time back has been from the farmers, "the reapers," who just now are temporarily pacified by large crops and good prices,—brought to them through the adversity of their fellow creatures in famine-striken India, and a shortage elsewhere—a pacification which will probably not last more than another year or two, except as war or famine or other calamities may be permitted of the Lord to grant temporary respite.

But now the "voice" of woe comes from another quarter: from the miners of bituminous coal, who claim that they cannot possibly endure longer the strain of competition, which, through idleness and in other ways, reduces their wages sometimes as low as $3.00 per week. They have "struck," demanding reform measures and better pay. To make their "strike" successful, they claim it is necessary to induce all, or nearly all, miners to join them; and to this end they have formed "marching bands" to endeavor peaceably to induce miners still at work to join in the strike.

The coal-mine owners have ordered the marchers off their property, as they of course have a right to do; but in addition, by going before the courts and swearing that they believe these "marching bands" *intend* injury to their property and to the persons of their miners now employed they have induced the courts to issue *Injunctions*, commanding the "marching bands" to disperse and not to march on the roads within a certain radius of the mines. The strikers obeyed as respects "bands," but in groups of two or three and singly they walked along the highways and shouted to the miners at work to come out and join in the strike for living wages. But the law of injunction seems to have deprived the strikers from using even that liberty. It is not to be wondered at, that this feature of injunction is criticised as contrary to the spirit of liberty and the Constitutional rights of the American people.

Nevertheless the majority of the well-to-do and wealthy seem to view the matter in the same light as do the courts, and to be willing to infringe the Constitutional rights of the laborer for the preservation of peace. But it will be found that such a peace is purchased at too high a cost. That the strikers have just cause for striking is generally admitted, and even by some of the operators; and that generally they have conducted themselves with great moderation and patience is also conceded.

The groundwork for this moderation lay in the fact that they hoped to succeed by virtue of the justice of their cause: but now when they find that the Courts of Justice are prejudiced against them so as to deprive them *as criminals*, of the liberty of their own highways, in anticipation that they *may become* criminals, can we wonder that their *faith* and *hope* for peaceable methods of redressing their grievances are blighted? No indeed. Do they not claim with justice that they have the right as freemen to assemble unarmed for the discussion of their welfare, as truly as the mine-owners may meet at the hotels or other rendezvous for the discussion of their interests and to persuade each other pro or con?

Of course there are occasions when Court injunctions are both proper and necessary, and it may be difficult at times to decide where the line should be drawn; but surely the wealthy and the Courts, if not blind to the true situation and deaf to "the *voice* of the day of the Lord" would avoid utterly discouraging the lower classes by destroying their confidence in the administration of justice: nothing else so quickly breeds the spirit of anarchy.

Hearken to the "voice of the day of the Lord" from St. Louis, sounding into the ears of the civilized world through the daily Press:—

"St. Louis, Aug. 31.—The conference of labor leaders of the country, which has been in session here two days, finished its work this evening. The meeting was productive of several sensational speeches and many resolutions. The platform as presented by the committee reads in part as follows:—

"The fear of the more watchful fathers of the republic has been justified. The judiciary has become supreme. We witness a political phenomenon absolutely new in the history of the world; a republic prostrate at the feet of judges appointed to administer its laws. They acknowledge no superior on earth, and their despotic deeds recall Milton's warning to his countrymen: 'Who bids a man rule over him above law, may bid as well a savage beast.'

"Under the cunning form of injunctions, courts have assumed to enact criminal laws, and, after thus drawing to themselves the power of legislation, have repealed the bill of rights, and for violation of those court-made laws have denied the accused the right of trial by jury.

"The exercise of the commonest rights of freemen—the right of assembly, the right of free speech, the right of traveling the public highway—have by legislation, under the form of injunctions, been made a crime, and armed forces disperse as mobs people daring in company to exercise these rights.

"Having drawn to themselves all the powers of the Federal Government until Congress and Presidents may act only by judicial permission, the Federal Judges have begun the subjugation of sovereign states, so that, unless a check is soon put upon the progress of usurpation, in a short time no government but the absolute despotism of federal judges will exist anywhere over any portion of American soil.

"Whereas, appeals to Congress and to the courts for relief are fruitless, since the legislative, as well as the executive and judicial powers are under the control of the capitalistic class, so that it has come to pass in this 'free country,' that while cattle and swine have a right to the public highways, Americans, so called freemen, have not.

"Whereas, our capitalistic class, as is again shown in the present strike, is armed, and has not only policemen, marshals, sheriffs and deputies, but also a regular army and militia, in order to enforce government by injunction, suppressing lawful assemblage, free speech and the right to the public highway; while, on the other hand, the laboring men of the country are unarmed and defenseless, contrary to the words and spirit of the Constitution of the United States; therefore, be it

"Resolved, That we hereby set apart Friday, the third day of September, 1897, as a 'Good Friday' for the cause of suffering labor in America and contribute the earnings of that day to the support of our struggling brothers, the miners, and appeal to every union man and every friend of labor throughout the country;" etc., etc., etc.

"Mr. Debs was then called for and said:

"I believe the gravity of the industrial situation in this country is well understood. It is quite evident the delegates to this convention are cognizant of the fact that civil liberty is dead in America. I have said and say again,—For the last time, I have appealed to the courts for justice, and shall appeal to them no more. The American Railway Union expended $45,000 to have the question of civil rights tested in the supreme courts of the United States, only to be told that we have no rights that capital is bound to respect. Shall we appeal to the supreme courts again? No. We appeal to this convention and to the country for an uprising of all the common people in every walk of life to beat back the courts and reënthrone the rights of the American people.

"From justice of the peace to justice of the supreme court of the United States, all the judicial powers of the United States are directed against labor. All the organized forces of society are against labor, and if labor expects to emancipate itself, labor itself must do it.

"The time has not quite come to incite the populace," said Mr. Debs, shaking his fist vehemently."

* * *

But will "the *voice* of the day of the Lord," as it comes from various quarters and swells into a mighty *roar* of the sea class (Luke 21:25) be heard, and will it be heeded, and will relief be granted, and will the threatened crash and the wreck of present institutions be avoided? No; God's Word shows us that it will not be averted;—so strong is the power of selfishness in the world that it blinds those who should see, if only in self-interest. But we leave this subject for MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. IV,—"THE DAY OF VENGEANCE," which we expect to commence mailing Oct. 1, next,—as and for the October and November issues of this journal.

INTERDENOMINATIONLISM VS. UNDENOMINATIONALISM

We have pointed out from time to time that the Christian Endeavor movement is too liberal to be tolerated by sectarians; and that having no common basis of *faith*, and proposing to ignore doctrines, the Society would be at a loss as to any definite object and be apt to drift into *Moralism*, Christian-politics, etc. The following quotations show that three Presbyterian journals are waking up to the fact that Christian Endeavorers will soon reach the place where they

cannot be depended upon as sectarians, whatever they may gain or lose as Christians.

The Editor of the *Michigan Presbyterian* says:—

"For two weeks we have been hesitating to say just what we felt, because of love for the Christian Endeavor work and for our brethren: but we are ready now to confess what has been for years slowly taking shape in our mind, that we honestly believe that it would have been far better for the Presbyterian church, and especially for our young people, if twelve years ago we had put the same amount of energy into organizing Westminster Leagues as we did into organizing the Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor. In short, we believe that our Westminster League brethren have been right during all these years of controversy. The reasons for this opinion are so many and so fundamental that it would take half a dozen articles even to state them, and half a dozen more to meet the arguments on the other side, many of them being arguments which we have honestly made ourselves, in synods and presbyteries. Nor is there any practical use in dwelling upon them, for it is now too late to make the radical change that could have been made successfully ten years ago."

The Editor of *The Presbyterian*, commenting on the foregoing, adds:—

"But whatever opinion one has upon the points raised, there is a fact brought out by our Michigan contemporary which is worthy of special consideration, and which shows the existence of elements of conflict and disintegration, which will sooner or later assert themselves. Dr. Clark has insisted upon its being interdenominational, and he has done his best to make it so. But look at the facts: What denominations come next in numbers to our own in Christian Endeavor work? The Congregationalist and the Campbellist. Congregationalism is more and more standing for union work, making its plea on that basis, and making its doors wide to all kinds of religious ideas, in a loosely confederated sort of way. Campbellism, through its leading organ, the *Christian Standard*, declares that as far as that body of believers is concerned, they reject utterly Dr. Clark's interdenominational ideas, and they are in the Christian Endeavor work to abolish denominationalism altogether. They make no secret of their mission to substitute for interdenominationalism undenominationalism."

The Presbyterian Banner prints a comment on the matter, saying:—

"We do not forget that Dr. Clark and Mr. Baer, editors of the *Golden Rule*, who hold the reins of control [over Christian Endeavorers], have made much show of denominational loyalty on the part of church societies, subordinate, however, to supreme loyalty to the organization. This strategic movement was made by them after charges had been brought, that the whole tendency of Christian Endeavor was in the direction of church union, or more properly, independent churches."

The Editor of the *Banner* assents, saying:—

"That there has been a marked change in the views of many ministers and elders and a large number of members of the Presbyterian denomination since the last meeting of the General Assembly at Saratoga cannot be doubted by any one familiar with the trend of opinion in the church. What ought to be done, or what can be done in the circumstances, we do not pretend to know at present. . . . . We agree with the Michigan Presbyterian that 'there is a great deal that we can do. We can make continually more of our own history, doctrines and plan of work, and continually less of the undenominational character of this work.'"

THE DIVINE RIGHT OF KINGS

At the unveiling of the equestrian statue of Emperor William I. at Coblentz, the present Emperor of Germany, in proposing a toast, made the following pointed statement of his conception of his office:

"My grandfather went forth from Coblentz to mount the throne as the chosen instrument of the Lord, and as such he regarded himself. For all of us, more especially for us princes, he raised the throne once more on high, crowning it with the bright rays of the treasure which may we ever preserve in its sublimity and holiness. I mean *the kingdom, by the grace of God*, the kingdom with its heavy duties, its never ending, ever enduring toils and labors, with its awful responsibility to the Creator *alone*, from which no man, no minister, no house of parliament, no people can release the prince. For me it will be a sacred duty, following in the ways which the great ruler has shown us and in solicitude for my country to hold my protecting hand over this splendid jewel."

It is well that all persons in and out of public office should recognize every influence and opportunity as a stewardship from God; but it is very peculiar that the king of Prussia having acquired imperial authority over the other German states with and by *their consent* to be so governed, should now recognize his accountability as to the Creator *alone*. He, like all other men, owes fealty to God in all his acts; but his *office* came from the people and should be esteemed amenable to the people who gave it. His views are part of the *leaven* dispensed by Papacy, at the bottom of much of the world's superstition; which in this particular has done good as well as harm. By and by we shall have the true king and the reign of righteousness, whose only object will not be to fight for the maintenance of a throne, but to "bless all the families of the earth."

"ZIONISM" ADVOCATED AND DEFENDED

The Jewish Conference respecting Zionism met at Basel, Switzerland, on August 30th, as proposed—to discuss the feasibility and advisability of Dr. Herzl's scheme for securing Palestine as a national home for the Jewish race, and assisting the poor and persecuted to return to the land of their fathers and to prosperity. The cable announces merely the fact that the Conference enthusiastically endorsed Dr. Herzl's suggestions, and sent to the Sultan of Turkey a telegram congratulating him upon the peace and prosperity of their race throughout his dominions. Hebrew was the language of the Convention—a very noteworthy indication.

Thus gradually, but surely, prophecy is fulfilling along this line also; keeping pace exactly with the developments along other lines—civil and religious—all rapidly approaching their foretold climaxes. Praise God!

Mr. Max Nordau, a Hebrew and a noted writer, expressed himself recently with great freedom in favor of the Zionist program and in oppositon to those Jews who are opposing it. He suggests that "rabbis and idiots" who now raise against the movement a "senseless outcry" may some day rejoice at the success of Zionism, because of the refuge it will afford "from the antisemitic storm gathering over their heads." (Antisemitism signifies opposition to the descendants of Shem; it includes all the races of Southwestern Asia—Assyrians, Arabs, Abyssinians, Hebrews, etc., but it is here and most frequently used to signify opposition to Hebrews, the Jews.) Proceeding, Dr. Nordau said:

"Zionism has been called into existence by the steady growth and encroachments of antisemitism in its various forms —official antisemitism in Russia, popular antisemitism in Germany and Austria. Being a German myself, I can only speak for my own country. There, I have no hesitation in saying, the Jew is not only not beloved, but he is positively hated and feared; and this aversion extends to all people having the faintest trace of Jewish blood in their veins.

"The antisemitic propaganda has turned people mad in Germany and Austria, and there seems to be no prospect of a change for the better. Although no one can accuse me certainly of being a parasite or a money-grabber—every penny I have earned has been the result of hard and conscientious labor—my mail is often weighed down with insulting anonymous letters from the other side of the Rhine. . . . Seeing that this anti-Jewish feeling is pretty well universal, or rapidly becoming so, why should the Jew himself, we ask, be satisfied to continue living in a hostile camp? Why should he be reduced to effacing his nationality? . . .

"The Jew, figuratively speaking, is constantly holding his hand in front of his nose to hide its peculiar aquilinity, which peculiarity, by the way, he shares with the all-conquering Romans of old. Why be ashamed of our natural and, above all, national characteristics? No, let us develop them on the contrary, form them in the right molds. Let us be true to ourselves, to our traditions, to the genius of our race. Then, indeed, will great things come out of this disordered mass. Israel will be herself again. This is the true essence of Zionism! . . . The gentle rabbis in Germany and the United States who have been poohpoohing our efforts may not be aware that at this moment hundreds of thousands of their coreligionists are living in the most awful squalor and misery conceivable within the confines of the Jewish pale of Russia or among the wild Kurdish tribes of Asia Minor."

* * *

Thus, the Jews themselves being the witnesses, God is *forcing* them back to the Promised Land for which many of them had lost all hope and all love.

Whether Palestine will be opened to the Jew by money, as they now propose, or whether it will be opened by war, we cannot say; but far more than the Zionists hope for will be attained by A. D. 1915. To permit all that God has promised that is due before that time, would demand that they be admitted to Palestine under the domination of some other power or powers very shortly.

Brother Kirkham tells us that when in Europe recently he was brought in contact with certain Jewish bankers to explain some inventions in tile making; and that incidentally he found an opportunity to explain God's plan of the ages, mentioning also that the due time had come for the restoration of divine favor to Israel. To his surprise his hearers manifested deep interest, and said that what he had said was in many respects closely in harmony with their own views. They then voluntarily sent with him an escort and showed him at a private marble yard, kept secret from the general public, columns of very fine marble in preparation, they said ,to form parts of a grand temple to be built at Jerusalem. The parts are being gotten ready according to draughted plans, and each stone is lettered and numbered to indicate the place for which it is intended.

THE DIVISION OF TURKEY ARRANGED

It is now pretty generally agreed that Austria and Russia have reached an agreement respecting the division of Turkey when it shall be judged that the opportune moment has arrived. Austria is to have Salonica and all the territory west of it, while Russia is to have Constantinople and a good share of the territory surrounding it and northward. But it is not intended to force a war; merely the arrangement is made so that in the event of another war with Turkey each nation will know the portions to sieze. It is said that Germany is very anxious to secure Syria, including Palestine, on the same terms; but that the other powers would permit this is very doubtful, as they all covet Palestine.

Our chief interest in the Turkish question is the opening of Palestine to the returning Israelites: if it, or even liberty of settlement therein, be conveyed to the Jews for money, we shall feel comparatively little further interest in Turkey.

THE LAMBETH CONFERENCE

The third Conference at Lambeth, near to London, has just been held, bishops of the Church of England being present "from divers parts of the earth." These conferences have done much to instil and foster the idea of Protestant Federation, and meantime are endeavoring to hold together the Episcopal church, doctrinally. To this end previous Conferences have advocated the appointment of a *Primate,* or Head Bishop, still higher than the Archbishop of Canterbury—practically a pope, without claims for his infallibility.

A large conservative element has thus far hindered this proposal; and the friends of the measure, abandoning hope along that line, have at this Conference secured the appointment of a "Central Consultative Committee" to assist and give advice on all theological points in controversy, with a view to *holding in some kind of harmony* the various branches of the Episcopal church in various climes, on doctrinal subjects, which the present day awakening of thought makes very difficult.

The Committee was agreed to, and is to be appointed by the chief minister of that church—the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury, of whose installation in office we not long since gave an account, pointing out also that he is a Higher Criticism unbeliever and an avowed Evolutionist, which signifies that he denies the ransom, and is not in any sense a real Christian, according to the New Testament standard. That he will appoint upon this committee such as are disbelievers in the Scriptures and in the ransom, like himself, goes without saying, and we may accordingly judge of the lines of error along which they will seek to harmonize the theological differences in the Church of England.

HEAR THOU MY PRAYER

O Lord, that pitiest all, hear thou my prayer—
For gold I ask not, nor for transient wealth,
Nor e'en for richer gifts, nor power, nor health,
But only this—to nestle in thy care.

To rest supreme in thee, and feel that there
No harm can come that thou hast not foreseen.
To trust alway, and on thy strength to lean,
To feel thy guiding hand mid every snare.

I ask that strength that comes alone from thee,
To falter not, nor any trials shun;
And eyes of faith, mid deepening gloom to see
My duty's path, and thus my course to run.

Beyond these years I look to that bright home.
Help thou my wavering step, O Lord, I come.

—Paul R. Wright.

FALLING AWAY FROM STEADFASTNESS

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing that ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness."—2 Pet. 3:17.

This exhortation applies to the Lord's consecrated people living at the present time. The proof of this is found in the context: the Apostle has just been portraying some of the events connected with the day of the Lord in which we are living—the "day of vengeance." In verse 10 he has pointed out that the present age will end with the dissolution of the symbolic "heavens" and the symbolic "earth," which, as we have elsewhere shown, signifies the utter disruption of the present social and ecclesiastical order. In verse 13 he points out that we are looking for a new order of things, and not hoping either to patch up the old order ourselves, or that others will succeed in patching what the Lord has declared "shall pass away." And now in our text he refers to "these things." In the eleventh verse he points out that those who have such expectations should be separate and distinct from all other people in the world, saying: "What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" And then in our text and in the verse preceding it he points out that at this particular time the Adversary will get advantage of certain ones, will beguile them, get them to wrest the Scriptures, and thus to deceive themselves to their own destruction—to their loss of present light at least.

Finding thus that the Apostle is particularly addressing ourselves, let us indeed give earnest heed to his counsel; for we well know that we live in what the Apostle Paul calls that "evil day."—Eph. 6:13.

We notice further that the Apostle is not addressing the worldly, nor even the average nominal Christian; but he specifies that his warning is to the "beloved," who already had attained to "steadfastness," This implies that they had become rooted and grounded and built up, both in the knowledge and in the love of God; for only such ever become steadfast. Does it surprise us that the Apostle should address such a developed class of Christians and warn them of their own personal danger of falling into the "error of the wicked?" It does strike us as peculiar, and we are inclined to think that there must be some hidden meaning in the expression—"error of the wicked."

It would be past comprehension that such a class as the Apostle has just described should be in great danger of falling into such errors of the wicked as blasphemy, or murder, or arson, or theft. We must look the matter up more carefully, and see whether or not the translators have given us a faithful rendering of the Apostle's words. We find that they have not, and that the word *wicked* is too strong: the Greek word is *athemos;* according to Professor Young's Analytical Concordance (undisputed authority) it signifies "*unsettled,*" or "lawless." Now, the passage seems more reasonable. There is danger, we can readily see, that those once established in the truth might be so led away as to become unsettled, and to wrest the Scriptures, "handle the word of God deceitfully," and thus become lawless in the sense that they would set aside the Word or law of God, and take instead thereof a twisted interpretation which would the better suit some theory of their own. Such a wrong course the Apostle points out would surely *unsettle* them, and eventually mean the destruction of their spiritual interests; and that they would go into "outer darkness" in respect to "present truth." "Beware, lest *ye also,* being led away with the error of the *unsettled,* fall from your own steadfastness."

The Apostle's language not only points to the present time, but seems to imply that there would be previous fallings away or siftings, which he calls "the error of the wicked" —literally, "the delusions of the unsettled or lawless." The implication seems to be that the not settled ones would first be shaken out, and that subsequently there would come a still more insidious trial which would test even the "steadfast." We inquire, therefore, have there been, during this "harvest" time (whilst we are waiting for the dissolution of the present order of things and for the establishment of the new order of things)—have there been such siftings or fallings away by delusions which have affected those not settled?

We answer: Yes, there have been several—we might recount some of these. First of all, came a shaking directly upon the subject of the ransom: Certain lawless ones, "heady," rejected the testimony of the Lord's Word, denying the Lord having "*bought us*" with his own precious blood. They would accept Christ as an example *only*, and claimed to be able to follow that example, and that they needed no sin-offering to compensate for their imperfections, inherited or personal. This the Adversary's first move was remarkably bold, yet it found adherents who were not rooted and grounded upon the testimony of the Lord's Word. Then came the "flat earth" theory, whose advocates strangely concluded that the shape of the earth is a part of the gospel; the result was that certain others of the unstable were "led away" in that delusion, by not settled leaders who wrested certain Scriptures to their own confusion and to the extinguishment of what light they had enjoyed.

Then came another delusion in effect teaching the old doctrine of Universalism—that God would finally force eternal salvation upon all men and even upon Satan himself. This theory of course also denied the ransom; because to have admitted that the condemnation to death pronounced in Eden could not be set aside without a ransom, *a corresponding price*, would logically have implied that disobedience under the second trial, secured by the ransom, would similarly bring an everlasting punishment—everlasting death—from which there could be no resurrection. Hence, this theory boldly denied the ransom, wrested or twisted the Scriptures which speak of the second death as "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord," handling this and other Scriptures so deceitfully as to declare that the second death would be a great blessing to all upon whom it would come. Of course none but *unstable* souls could be beguiled by such open and arrogant perversions of the Word of God.

But still another sifting came for the "unlearned" and unsettled, not thoroughly furnished with the whole armor of God; this was the teaching that God is the author and instigator of all the sin, crime and wickedness there is in the world; and that after he shall become weary of evil doing he will reform, change his course and incite all mankind to righteousness and holiness, as he now (this theory claims) incites the majority to sin, etc. Of all the theories which the adversary has brought out in this "evil day," this one seems to be the most blasphemous. So-called "orthodoxy" is certainly quite blasphemous enough, in claiming that God, after permitting his creatures to be "born in sin and shapen in iniquity" (which he had nothing to do with bringing upon them), claims that, as a punishment for sins which they could not avoid, the vast majority of the human family will be imprisoned in a flaming hell of unspeakable torture, and divinely provided with everlasting life, so that they shall never be able to escape those sufferings by death, and that the devil will be similarly supplied with eternal life (but free from pain) for the purpose of torturing them; and that fuel for the torture will to all eternity be provided by divine power. We say that this is extremely blasphemous of the divine character, yet it is as nothing at all in comparison to the teaching which claims that God is the instigator, the first cause, of all the sin and crime and wickedness in the world. This theory also wrested some Scriptures to its support, just as Spiritism and Christian Science do. Of course only those who had never become thoroughly rooted and grounded in the truth could ever be "led away" by such a blasphemous delusion as this.

The Anglo-Israel question, and communistic and social questions, "led away" from the truth, and into more or less darkness and confusion, some others who were not well rooted and grounded in the knowledge of the fact that all present institutions will go down, and that the new order of things to be introduced will not be of human institution, but the work of God through the glorified Christ.

But the Apostle comes in our text to a time *after* such delusions had "led away" those not established or settled; and his warning is given to the *steadfast*. The implication seems to be that the adversary has more subtle delusions before us than any of those in the past; and that the fully consecrated of the Lord's people may need to be more than ever on guard against "the wiles of the devil." "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things [that all of the affairs, reforms, etc., of the present time will avail nothing, and that all the present institutions will pass away, and that God is about to establish his own kingdom in his own way; and knowing further, that just at this particular time there will be a special sifting and testing of those who are in the light], *beware lest ye* ALSO, *being led away* with the error of the wicked [the *unsettled* or *lawless*, who do not bow implicitly to the Lord's Word, but wrest it to establish theories of their own], fall from your own steadfastness."

(While the "siftings" specially affect those who have been brought by the Lord into the light of present truth, yet in a more general way and along different lines slightly different siftings are in progress with the nominal church as a whole. Each denomination is being shaken, and the theories of Evolution, Spiritism, Christian Science, Theosophy and Moralism are making great inroads upon all who have named the name of Christ, even if they have not come into the light of the "harvest" truth. Unsettled, lacking the knowledge of the divine Word and plan, *necessary in this evil day*, the whole nominal church is gradually losing its faith in the Bible, under the lead of its most able ministers, who, blinded to present truth and unable to rightly divide the Word of truth, are generally coming to hold the opinion that their own ideas respecting truth ("higher criticism") are superior to the Scripture presentations.)

The Apostle in our text cautions that we beware against being "*led away*." The word here rendered "led away" occurs in only one other place in the Scriptures (Gal. 2:13), where the Apostle Paul says, "Barnabas also was *carried away* with their dissimulation." The words "*carried away*" give the same thought as "led away," but a little more strongly: they imply that the danger to the steadfast will be along some line which would *sweep away* or *carry away* their judgments from the fixed statements of the divine Word, through personal preference, or sympathy, or through the influence of some one held in respect or esteem. Let us all therefore be on guard, that whoever may, consciously or unconsciously, become the instrument of the adversary, and seek to lead us away from the sure testimonies of the Lord's Word (whether congenial to our natural tastes or uncongenial), we may *not be "carried away,"* but that we may be more determined than ever that—

> "To our Lord we will be true
> Who bought us with his blood.
> Only Jesus we will we know,
> And Jesus crucified."

While we see that the danger to the majority of God's people will be through being "*carried away*" by sympathy, influence, etc., we must remember that this implies that there will be certain *leaders of thought* whose conduct will tend to carry away the others. It is not necessary for us to suppose that these leaders into error will knowingly and intentionally get wrong themselves, and carry away numbers with them into their delusions and lawless disregard for the testimony of the Lord's Word, wresting its statements. We may rather assume that in a majority of instances these leaders will be themselves deceived; as the Apostle expresses it—"deceiving and being [themselves] deceived."—2 Tim. 3:13.

All who seek to teach the divine plan to others are exposed to peculiar temptations, so that the honor of serving the Lord and his people demands a correspondingly larger measure of the graces of the holy Spirit, as well as of knowledge. The tendency of knowledge, as the Apostle points out, is merely to puff up, make vain and conceited, and to become a temptation of the adversary, to draw away followers after them. (Acts 20:30) Whoever therefore would be an instructor of others, a mouth-piece of the Lord, should cultivate all the various graces of the holy Spirit, including meekness; that these combined (Love) with knowledge, may build up himself as well as build up those to whom he ministers. "Knowledge [alone] puffeth up, but love buildeth up."—1 Cor. 8:1.

Let us not forget that there is a way, and one way only, whereby we may *insure* ourselves against falling into any of these traps of the adversary. This insurance is not secured wholly by knowledge, although knowledge is a very important element in it: it is secured chiefly by obedience to the principles laid down in the Lord's Word, and illustrated in the life and character of our Lord and his apostles. The same Apostle who addresses us this caution against falling from our own steadfastness, tells us in the same epistle (1:5-12), "If ye *do these things*, ye shall never fall: for so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

What things? Does he give us the particulars of this work of grace that will so *insure us* against falling that we shall receive the great prize? Yes. He tells us that it is by continually adding to our stock of the heavenly graces—"Add to your faith fortitude, and to fortitude knowledge, and to knowledge self-control, and to self-control patience, and to

patience piety, and to piety brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love; for these things being in you and abounding, they will not permit you to be inactive or unfruitful in the knowledge [personal intimacy, acquaintance] of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . Therefore, brethren, give the more earnest heed that you may make your calling and election sure, for if ye do these things ye shall never fall."

IS FAITH IN CHRIST NECESSARY?

Rev. John H. Barrows, D. D., President of "The World's Parliament of Religions," held in Chicago in 1893, has returned from his visit to India. He recently wrote an account of his experiences there, in which he tells that he was asked by the Hindoos whether or not he believed that "all men will finally be saved." He states the answer he made them, as follows: "I replied, My Master does not encourage me to cherish such a hope. *I do entertain a hope, however, for some who have never heard of the historic Christ.* There are minds, like that of Socrates, *naturally Christian.* If I do not meet Socrates in heaven, I think it may be because I have not kept the right road myself."

Dr. Barrows's views are a fair sample of the views of a rapidly growing class of Christian people—all except those recognized as "old fogies"—all the "learned" and "intelligent," both in pulpit and pew. What does it mean? It means that these people have repudiated the only Gospel taught by our Lord and his inspired apostles and have made for themselves another gospel, which omits all the prominent features of the New Testament good tidings.

(1) The center of the New Testament Gospel is that, whereas Adam sinned and fell from the divine likeness, Christ Jesus died for man's sins, redeeming Adam and his posterity by the sacrifice of his own life as "a *ransom* [a corresponding price] for all." The new, false gospel denies this, declares that Adam never was in the divine image and could not fall from it; but that he was more nearly a monkey's image, and has been constantly rising out of it for the past six thousand years; and from this basis it is forced to deny that our Lord's death was in any sense a ransom for man; for if man has been evolving grandly out of monkey conditions, the progress would not be a sin and would require no atonement. If *original sin* is denied, a *sacrifice for that sin* must be denied and is denied, logically, by all Evolutionists.

(2) The essence of the New Testament Gospel is the offer of pardon and reconciliation to God, to all who will accept the blessings secured by the ransom. The new, false gospel denying the ransom and all need of one, necessarily denies the offer of *forgiveness* and *reconciliation*, claiming that the race never was alienated from God, denying that we were born in sin, denying that father Adam ate the sour grape of sin, and that in consequence the teeth of all his children are set on edge.—Ezek. 18:2.

(3) The first requirement of the New Testament of all who would share its blessings is *faith*. God's grace provided the atonement, and Christ's death was the means or channel through which he provided it; but he most specifically declares that sinners may avail themselves of this grace *only* by the exercise of faith. As the Apostle declares, we are *justified by faith*, and by it also we enter into all other favors of the divine provision. (Rom. 5:1, 2) Nor is this required faith a general faith—a faith in anything we may please, or in nothing in particular: quite to the contrary, it is a faith in God and in Christ Jesus. It goes still farther and demands that the faith shall be in Jesus' death as the sin-offering and in his resurrection as the Saviour from sin, and from death the wages of sin, through the kingdom of God which he will establish at his second advent.

The new, false gospel plainly declares a union with Christ by living faith, or any other kind of faith, unnecessary. Mark the words of Dr. Barrows italicised above. Alas! we fear that, as the doctor suggests, there is great danger that he has lost "the way, the truth and the life" now set before the overcoming church. He certainly, and many in his company, "have not kept the right road" to the kingdom, as marked out in the Scriptures.

But we are glad to hope that Dr. Barrows and some others, equally well intentioned and deluded, will by and by, after the kingdom is set up, get the eyes of their understanding opened, and see and *truly believe* and be blessed. There, too, they will meet Socrates, for "all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of Man and come forth;" and there, under the blessings of the Millennial kingdom, "all the blind eyes shall be opened," and then "the god of this world [Satan]," who now *blinds "the minds of them which believe not"* shall be bound for a thousand years "that he should deceive the nations no more." (2 Cor. 4:4; Rev. 20:2, 3) But the favor then opened to believers will be the earthly paradise restored, not the heavenly kingdom and the divine nature now held before the Gospel church as the prize of her high calling to which, by faith and obedience, she is to make her calling and election sure. (2 Pet. 1:10) Hear the word of the Lord:

"The Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by *faith* of Jesus Christ might be given to *them that believe.* But *before faith came* we were kept under the law, shut up unto [waiting for] the *faith* which should afterwards be revealed."—Gal. 3:22, 23.

"It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save *them that believe.* . . . We preach *Christ crucified,* . . . the power of God and the wisdom of God."—1 Cor. 1:21, 23, 24.

"We believe that Jesus died and rose again."—1 Thess. 4:14.

"These [testimonies of John's Gospel] are written, that ye might *believe that Jesus* is the Christ, the Son of God; that *believeth ye might have life* through his name."—John 20:31.

"Neither pray I [Jesus] for these [apostles] alone, but for them also which shall *believe on me through their word.*"—John 17:20.

"He whom God raised again saw no corruption. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that *through this man* [Christ Jesus] is preached unto you *the forgiveness of sins*, and by him *all that believe are justified* from all things."—Acts 13:37-39.

"When they *believed* Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized."—Acts 8:12.

"Ye were not *redeemed* with corruptible things, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ . . . manifest for you who by him do believe in God, that raised him from the dead and gave him glory."—1 Pet. 1:18-23.

"I have not shunned to declare unto you the whole counsel of God." "So we preach and so ye *believe.*"—Acts 20:27; 1 Cor. 15:11.

"That is the word of *faith* which we preach; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. . . . The Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. . . . For whosoever *shall call* upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?"—Rom. 10:8-14.

PAUL'S HEART REVEALED

SEPT. 19.—ACTS 20:22-35.

"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."—Acts 20:35.

Perhaps no other words give us a clearer insight into the heart of the Apostle Paul than his address to the elders of the church at Ephesus. They show us what were the moving impulses of his active life. He sought not for ease or fame or worldly pleasure. He was thoroughly imbued with his Master's holy Spirit which delighted in honoring God and doing good to all, regardless of earthly reward, persecutions, insults, slander and misrepresentations.

In our lesson for August 29th we saw how the Apostle "endured a great fight of affliction" at Ephesus, just as he was about to start for Macedonia. It is supposed that he spent about ten months in Macedonia and Greece, visiting the churches of Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea and Corinth, besides extending his labors into other cities further north, not previously reached, but where some interest had been awakened by others. Having gone the rounds, he was now on his way to Jerusalem with the collections of the churches of Macedonia and Corinth. His time was limited, if he would reach Jerusalem in season for the Passover, and hence instead of going overland and visiting the churches of Asia-Minor, he continued his course by sea and sent word from Miletus, the seaport to Ephesus, inviting the elders of the church there to

come to him: and this lesson is Luke's report of his discourse.

God made known to the Apostle the fact that something extradordinary was to befall him at Jerusalem, as a consequence of which he would never again have the privilege of meeting these dear brethren in the flesh. This made the present meeting with the elders or representatives of the church a specially impressive one, and at the end of his talk his auditors were in tears.

Wishing to stimulate these dear brethren who, inasmuch as they were chosen as elders or special servants of the church, may be regarded as amongst the most earnest and zealous of the Lord's people in Ephesus, the Apostle very briefly refreshes their minds on a subject already well known to them; —his own methods and course as a minister of Christ. He would impart to them some of his own spirit of consecration—the Master's spirit—that they might be the more faithful as servants of the Lord and of his people. He reminds them, but not boastfully, of his own humility of mind in serving the church; how he kept back nothing that was profitable to them, but on the contrary sought to impart to all the same knowledge of the divine character and plan which he himself enjoyed, and how he had not affected a superior wisdom that made peculiar statements without submitting the proofs. The inference is left for his hearers that they would thenceforth have an increased responsibility and should seek to follow the same heaven directed course.

While telling them that his trials were not over, but that evidently worse things awaited him, he courageously declares, "But none of these things move me, neither do I count my life dear unto myself, so that I may finish my course with joy and [fulfil] the ministry that I received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel by the grace of God."

After calling their attention to his own faithfulness in keeping back nothing that would be profitable, and thus making sure that he was free from responsibility in respect to any that might fall away, he exhorts his hearers to take heed, to be careful (1) of themselves; that they might make their own calling and election sure; that they might so walk in the footsteps of the Master that they would be acceptable to him. And (2) they should remember that, having accepted special appointment as ministers, they had an added responsibility on behalf of the Lord's flock. Oh, that all the servants of the Lord's cause might take this exhortation to heart, and feel the responsibility that rests upon all who minister in holy things. (And this will apply in a still wider sense, for every brother and every sister is to some extent his brother's and sister's keeper, and is commissioned to help in watching over the Lord's flock.) The Apostle points out that their commission is not merely that of the church which selected them to be its servants in holy things, but that they became representatives of the holy Spirit, and are therefore not to think lightly of the responsibility which they have accepted. The whole church of the consecrated are begotten of the Spirit, and hence their conscientious action in selecting their elders, according to divine direction, is to be considered the work and selection of the holy Spirit.

The object of the appointment of these elders, as the Apostle points out, was to *feed* the church of Christ; to bring to the attention of the flock the green pastures and still waters of divine truth. They are not commissioned to pen them up in human sects and thus hinder the sheep from pasturing upon the Lord's provision. Neither are they to consider the sheep as so much mutton whereoff they may feed themselves, and from whom they may shear the golden fleece for their own benefit: they are to remember that the church is not theirs, but God's, which he purchased with the precious blood. They are therefore to conduct themselves as servants or ministers of the Lord's flock, and not as its lords and masters.

Speaking prophetically, the Apostle declares his knowledge of the fact that greedy wolves would get in amongst the flock, and full of selfishness would be reckless of the interests of the sheep, and careful only of their own interests. These are some of the "wolves" which deceptively present themselves "in sheep's clothing," for otherwise the sheep would be on guard against them. And still worse than this the Apostle prophesies,—there would arise amongst themselves certain "heady" ones who, desirous of name and fame, would preach errors in order to "draw away disciples after them." Alas, how true this prophecy has proved, applicable not only to the church at Ephesus but to the church all the way down, from then until now. How few like the Apostle seem willing to preach not themselves, but Christ, and not human philosophies (their own or those of other men) but the cross of Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God to every one that believeth. And the Apostle points out that he had been guarding them and the whole church along these lines for three years.

These, he says, will speak *perverse things;*—that is, they will distort the truth, to make it harmonize with some theory which they have accepted and which they wish to impress upon others, thereby exalting themselves as the discoverers of new light. No less than five of these false teachers who arose in the church of Ephesus, some before and some after, are mentioned in the Apostle's epistles to Timothy, —Hymeneus, Alexander, Phygellus, Hermogenes and Philetus. —1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 1:15; 2:17.

Under the circumstances, realizing the trials that were coming about them, and that he would be unable to share these with them, what commendation would the Apostle give to these representatives of the church? He gave them grand advice in these words, "I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified." Ah yes, there can be no better recommendation to any than this—to keep close to the divine Word, and to take heed lest they twist or wrest the Scriptures, and thus blind themselves and make ready for the adversary to lead them further into darkness. The Apostle thus points out to them that they are not yet ready for the heavenly inheritance; that they must first be built up in sanctification; and that the spirit of the Lord's Word permeating them will more and more produce this santification of heart and life.

What a noble testimony by the grace of God Paul was enabled to give: "I have coveted no man's silver or gold or apparel." He not only had used his trade as a tent-maker for his own support, but also to help financially those who were associated with him in the gospel work. Praise God for so noble an example of devotion! For altho the Apostle could not and did not endure more, nor as much, as his Redeemer, and is not to be considered as a superior example, nevertheless the illustration of a full devotion which his life affords does us great good; for we remember that our Lord was perfect,—holy, harmless, separate from sinners; but the Apostle declares that he had "like passions" with ourselves;—he was imperfect, and obliged to keep his "body under," in subjection to his new mind, the will of God in Christ.

And now we come to the grandest expression of the whole discourse: "I have showed you [illustrated to you, in] all things, how that so laboring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Would that these words might be deeply graven upon all our memories. The world's rule, the general disposition of the fallen nature, is to give adherence or support to the strong, and expect weaker ones to rally around and support or uphold us. This is self-pleasing—the way of the fallen nature: but the method of the "new creatures" is to be the reverse of this—they are to be on the lookout for the welfare, interests and comforts of others, especially in their own families; and applying the Apostle's words to the church they inculcate carefulness for the weaker members of the "household of faith." Each of the stronger should take pleasure in helping the weaker and the less learned, and so far as possible in bringing all up to the stature of manhood in Christ.

And the Apostle here shows that the secret of his success as a servant of the Lord, and the reason why his life could be pointed to as a pattern, was that he was remembering and putting into practice the words of the great Teacher. The art of *giving himself* is one of the secrets of a happy Christian life. He first gives his will to the Lord, then his time, his energy, his talents, to the service of the Lord and for the Lord's people. He has pleasure in the giving and a blessing, whether others know and appreciate it or not; and by and by his time for receiving will come,—the Lord's time for giving. The Lord will give unto such eternal life, eternal glory and association with himself in his kingdom.

REVIEW—SEPTEMBER 26

PAUL'S LAST JOURNEY TO JERUSALEM

OCTOBER 3.—ACTS 21:1-15.

"I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."—Acts 21:13.

The date on which the Apostle Paul, after his interview with the elders of the church of Ephesus at Miletus resumed his journey toward Jerusalem, is calculated by those who have made a special study of the subject, to have been Monday, April 24, A. D. 58. He wished to reach Jerusalem about the time of the Passover, but apparently was somewhat delayed enroute, and it is supposed he did not reach there until May 17—Pentecost day, that year.

The expression "after we had gotten from them," would seem to refer to the affectionate parting between Paul and those who accompanied him, and the Elders of Ephesus with whom evidently Timothy remained. As noticed in the previous lesson, "they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing:" so that they were finally obliged to break away from them, to get aboard their vessel. There is nothing very special in the account of the journey: it was in a sailing vessel, slow and tedious and rather uninteresting. Probably the master and crew of that small vessel had little idea how much the value of their ship's burden was enhanced by the addition of Paul and his company. Little did they know how honorable a servant and ambassador of the Most High was their guest and passenger, and how he and his associates carried with them the gospel of divine grace, a pearl of great price. "The world knoweth us not, even as it knew him not." Paul's company seems to have consisted (1) of Luke, the writer of this account, who uses the pronoun *we;* (2) Trophimus (verse 29); (3) Aristarchus (Acts 27:2).

Paul's experience in the city of Tyre serves to show us the bond of sympathy and Christian love which prevailed in the early church. Apparently Paul and his companions were unaware that there were believers at Tyre, but, no doubt providentially, they found some; and so close was the bond of Christian sympathy that the finding of them insured the finding of fast and loving friends. We may imagine the blessed experiences of the little group of believers during the seven days of the Apostle's stay with them. We are not told what was done, but from the character of the Apostle we may judge with considerable accuracy, for "a good fountain sends forth sweet waters" only. He surely did not waste time in telling them of his many travels and the various scenes in foreign lands. We may be sure also that, having the spirit of love shed abroad in his heart he did not indulge in "*gossip*" in respect to the Lord's people in the various places he had visited: he had come under "the royal law" of love, which neither thinketh nor speaketh ill of his neighbor; and we may be sure he would be doubly careful of what he would say to or about the Lord's "brethren." Paul had a grander mission than this, and a mind too noble to permit him to be either a "busy-body in other men's matters" or a gossiper. He had more important business: As he elsewhere expressed himself, "This one thing I do,"—the Father's business. Forgetting the things which were behind, and pressing forward to those things which were before, he ran with patience the race set before him in the Gospel, for the prize of the high calling; looking unto Jesus as both the Author and Finisher of his faith.

We may therefore know assuredly that those seven days were profitably employed by the Apostle in talking over with the church at Tyre the gracious plan of God, his precepts and his promises to those who love and obey him. The impression made indicates that the Apostle had become a lifelong friend of the Tyre believers, so much so that they were all loth to part, and husbands, wives and children accompanied Paul and his associates clear outside the city limits, and they parted with prayer. Where such holiness of heart, singleness of purpose and devotion to the Lord are found, there cannot be found in the same individual a contrary spirit; and all who are in close company with such a Christian will be profited and helped and kept thereby.

A briefer visit was made at Ptolemais, the next stop being with Philip, the evangelist, at Cesarea. We are not surprised to find a church at Cesarea, for it was here that the gospel to the Gentiles first was preached; this being the residence of Cornelius the first Gentile convert. (Acts 10:1) We may reasonably suppose that a man like Cornelius who, before receiving the gospel, "feared God with all his house" and "gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway," on receiving the good tidings of great joy would become ten fold more zealous than he had even been before. That the church at Cesarea was of considerable size is evident from the fact that Philip made it his headquarters, and that this was the third visit which Paul had made to this city during his travels.—See Acts 9:30; 18:22.

The statement of verse nine to the effect that Philip had four virgin daughters "which did prophecy" is worthy of notice. The word "prophesy" is used in many instances in the New Testament to describe public or semi public speaking and not always a foretelling of future events. It is somewhat difficult to know which view should be taken in the present case, because in the next verse Agabus is mentioned as a prophet—a foreteller of future events—possessing the gift of prophesying. But whichever view of the word prophesying we apply to the daughters of Philip, the intimation would be that women were recognized of the Lord in connection with the ministry of the gospel in the early church. In attempting to reach safe and sound Scriptural conclusions on this subject, it is proper that we take into consideration all the statements and all the facts bearing upon it. While the Apostle writes most positively "I suffer not a woman to teach or to usurp authority over a man," he also says that if women in the church pray or prophesy, it should be with their heads covered; and, thus we see that his other statement that "I suffer not a woman to teach" must be understood in a qualified sense and in connection with the latter part of that statement—not to usurp teaching functions over and above men. We find, nevertheless, that the Apostle greatly appreciated the co-operation of female believers, and that he speaks of them in the highest terms of appreciation.

In all this Paul followed closely in the footsteps of the Master who, tho he appreciated very highly and specially "loved" Martha and the Marys and several honorable women among his disciples, and altho he privileged one of them to be the first to know of his resurrection, and tho he sent the message of his resurrection by one of them to Peter and the other disciples, nevertheless he did not make use of women in connection with the public ministry of the Gospel. He not only chose males for the twelve apostles, but also subsequently for the seventy evangelists sent forth to declare him and the kingdom of God at hand. It behooves us to note the divine leadings on this and on all other subjects and to follow as closely as circumstances will permit in the same footsteps,—whether we see or do not see, positively, the philosophy of the inspired methods. It may be argued that women were more ignorant then and are more intelligent now, but this would not account for the matter satisfactorily, because we know that the masses of the men were correspondingly ignorant of literature and philosophy at that time: as for instance in our Lord's case, the people in general marveled that *he could read,* and very few men except amongst the Scribes had the necessary education to read, or any use for such an education, since books were very rare and costly.

Without offering any reason why this should be so, without attempting to give any explanation of the divine course, we can very safely afford to wait for the few remaining years, until "that which is perfect is come," without attempting to change in any particular degree or even to greatly modify the methods instituted by our Lord, and generally practiced by the early church. Especially so when we notice that Satan's method seems to be along diametrically opposite lines: he uses females chiefly—for Spiritualistic mediums, for Christian Science instructors and healers, and as apostles of Theosophy.

On the contrary, we have no sympathy with the sentiment apparently held by some brethren, that the sisters of the church are to be entirely ignored, and that any suggestions which they may offer respecting the Word of the Lord should be despised. But, while recognizing certain facts and principles on this subject laid down in the Scriptures, all should remember that it is a part of the Christian duty to be kind and courteous to *all,* overbearing and dogmatic toward *none,* male or female. And furthermore, let us remember that, while the outward proprieties acceptable to the Lord, may distinguish the more public ministers as for men, and the more private ministries for women, yet amongst those who are faithful to their appointed ministries, as the Lord has been pleased to arrange for them, there is no personal discrimination as between the sex in our Lord's love and estimation; "there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male or female," but all are one in Christ Jesus.—Gal. 3:28.

Distinction as to nationality, freedom or sex, while they may be properly enough recognized in their relationship with the affairs of this present time, have no bearing whatever upon our Lord's love for us, nor upon our love for each other, nor upon the conditions of the future, when all these *distinctions will be removed;* that which is perfect having then come, national distinctions and different degrees of freedom, as well as sexual differences will all be obliterated. So then, while under divine providence a bondman may not be granted

the opportunity to render as great a service in the Lord's cause as if he were a free man, while a very poor man might not have the same opportunities for services as if he were made a steward of wealth, and while the sisters may not under divine commission take quite so prominent a place in the public ministry of the truth as the brethren, nevertheless each one who is faithful in the use of the opportunities which the Lord has given him will be blessed according to his faithfulness to the Lord's arrangement;—*as greatly*, we may suppose, as tho equally faithful in the use of larger opportunities. And each one should be zealous to render all the service possible to the Master, in harmony with the station and conditions under which he has been placed through divine providence. The bondman is not to feel that the only way in which he can serve the Lord acceptably would be by becoming a master instead of a servant: nor are the sisters to suppose that the only way in which to be acceptable and to show their zeal would be by usurping authority over the man, contrary to the divine order in nature, and as set forth in the Scriptures. On the contrary, thankfulness and gratitude to God is to be the ruling sentiment of our lives; and our zeal is to be, to use every opportunity which the Lord shall bring to our hands, rather than to endeavor to alter his arrangements in the mistaken thought we might thus render him a greater or more acceptable service.

The Agabus mentioned in the tenth verse had already been manifest before the church, as specially used of the Lord in foretelling the famine which came upon not only Palestine, but a large part of the civilized world at that time. (Acts 11:27) His prophecy therefore of bonds and imprisonment awaiting Paul at Jerusalem would have great weight with all the church. He accompanied it with signs, as was common with the prophets of olden time. (Jer. 13:5; 19:10, 11; Ezek. 4:1-3; 5:1-4. etc.) Believing implicity that Agabus (as he declared) spoke as a mouthpiece of the holy Spirit, the friends began to importune the Apostle to discontinue his journey to Jerusalem; even his companions joining in the request. But Paul was fully convinced that it was the Lord's will that he should go to Jerusalem and could not be hindered from so doing. As he had told the elders of Ephesus that the holy Spirit witnessed to him that bonds and imprisonments awaited him at Jerusalem, so now he was not surprised when through Agabus came another intimation to the same effect. His noble answer to the fears and entreaties of the brethren was in the sublimely courageous and yet beautifully sympathetic language of our Golden Text. O. how important it is that we should all learn the lesson, not to be moved from faithfulness to the Lord and his commands; neither by the tears and entreaties of friends nor by the frowns and threats of our foes.

"Where duty calls or danger, be never lacking there."

Paul's firmness would no doubt be misunderstood by some, to be obstinancy and self-will: in reality however it was the very reverse of these. Self-will in him was completely subordinated to the divine will; and instead, therefore, of its being obstinacy it was *faithfulness* that he exhibited. His determination carried the day, and the others acquiesced, saying not, Paul's will be done; but, recognizing that Paul was faithfully carrying out the divine plan they said, "The will of the Lord be done."

INTERESTING LETTERS

Connecticut.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—How hard are the barnacles over the understanding of the people. Indeed, "gross darkness has covered the people," but to us has been given a great light. Praise God!

We here in S. find no seeming interest in the truth. At one of the church prayer meetings a woman rose and said it was her duty to warn people against us, that any one who believed as we did would surely go to hell, and in fire and torment repent when it was too late. One of our bitterest opponents, a man who stood and looked at us in a church prayer meeting, said, "There are some folks who are believing and preaching another chance after death, but I warn all against such doctrine, for the Bible says death ends all, and I have the Scriptures to prove it, and to back up what I say."

This was another public assault, and I, knowing the people had heard me say many times that I stood upon the Word, felt it was my duty to reply and define my position; so I said, "No doubt this brother has made his assertion after a careful study and comparison of the Scriptures, but as I have been studying too, and have reached an opposite conclusion, and as the brother has said he has the Scriptures for proof, I would call on the brother for some of his proofs, being able to give him many, many passages in support of mine." But he never peeped, and last week at a church prayer meeting I spoke on the 1st chapter of Ephesians and said, that predestination was of a class not to individual salvation; spoke of the dispensation of the fullness of times as I see it; of what our inheritance is to be; what the earnest of our inheritance is; what Christ really did redeem; what it means to emerge from blindness, superstition and ignorance of God's plan in the nominal church; and of the hope of my calling, giving my Scriptures for my belief. I had liberty.

He rose to his feet and said, "I thank God that Brother M. ever came to this meeting. I have never seen, before his explanation of this chapter, how many good things God had provided, and I have never understood the Bible so well as tonight. His explanation has opened many other things that were dark to me and I cannot tell how glad I am to know something of these, which to me have always been mysteries;" and he went home and told his wife how I had opened for his benefit the Scriptures, and that I had been much misrepresented to him.

We are as ever, Yours in him,

F. U. and N. C. MELLEN.

West Virginia.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Greetings from this house—Mrs. Gillis and myself. Your presentation of 1 Cor. 13 exceeds expectation and will certainly prove an answer to the prayers of the faithful asking assistance to put on the character of our Lord. I am glad of the proposals you therein make; with the Lord's presence among us there is no doubt of the helpfulness. I have been assisted the past week since adopting your suggestions. Will endeavor to gratefully read and worship in unison with you and all tomorrow, reading 1 Cor. 13. May we all grow in grace and knowledge. [We have *many* hearty responses to the suggestion, and blessings are already reported. —EDITOR.]

I was led to search how it came that charity got into Paul's letter to the Corinthians from the word *agape*, and find the word charity is coined from the pure Latin word *caritas*. The *h* being inserted to make it appear as if the Apostle had used the Greek *charis*. The translators having the disadvantage of "corrected" (?) MSS, it seems accepted *charitas* as Latin for Greek *charis*—charity. *Caritas* is from *caras*, dear, costly; and *careo*, to want (dear-th, scarce). The only sense in which there is even a remote equivalent in *caritas* for *agape* is the love we have for things dear, scarce, costly.

Two or three times out of four issues, the county paper, *Journal*, gives me privilege of a column or more on first page. It does not publish Talmage's sermons. Our town paper here does publish Mr. T.'s eloquence, but its Editor is in sympathy with the truth as far as he has learned. It was to him you sent a set of DAWNS in cloth some time ago,—he was then on the *Journal*.

May you be encouraged in every trial and come off more than conqueror through his grace who loved us and gave himself for us. Remember me at the times of prayer that I may develop the new nature—Love. Yours in Christ,

H. L. GILLIS.

P. S.—Love to Sister Russell. I connect you both in my mind.

MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. IV

Special issue, will represent four issues of this journal: Oct. 1 and 15, and Nov. 1 and 15. We expect to begin mailing it October 1, 1897. It will be sent to all WATCH TOWER subscribers not then in arrears as and for those numbers, without extra charge. Regular price in cloth binding $1.25, in leatherette 50 cents, in paper covers 35 cents per volume.

"THE DAY OF VENGEANCE"—DAWN, VOL. IV

As announced in our issue of Sept. 15, the fourth volume of MILLENNIAL DAWN was sent to all paid up subscribers as representing the October and November issues of ZION'S WATCH TOWER. All who failed to receive a copy should notice the date beside their names on the address tag. If the date is *past* it indicates that the subscription *expired* at that date. If the tag differs from your record of the matter, you should drop a card to the TOWER PUB. CO., explaining and inquiring. Those regularly on the list as "*the Lord's poor*," who applied for the TOWER for and during 1897, received a copy of DAWN, volume IV., the same as cash subscribers.

The second edition of ten thousand of this volume will soon be ready. This volume bids fair to be quite in demand by the public. Many can grasp the subject from this standpoint who are not disposed to heed direct appeals to the Bible: to many we hope it will prove to be an entering wedge for the truths of other volumes.

The first half of the volume is not as new to WATCH TOWER readers as to others; but it seemed necessary to a complete treatment of the topic and, as many letters already received indicate, even the review portion is fresh and interesting and strengthening to those who know it best.

"THE ANOINTING WHICH YOU HAVE RECEIVED"

1 JOHN 2:21, 27.

Every blessing which God has given to us as his people, our adversary, Satan, would if possible take from us; and to this end he seeks to deceive us in respect to the real gifts and provisions of God;—to mislead us respecting the truth, and to substitute for it something which will prove an injury to us. The general truth is forcibly exemplified in connection with the Scriptural teaching respecting the holy spirit and Satan's misrepresentation of the same, by which multitudes of Christians are deceived, blinded and hindered from spiritual development. A few poor translations in our Common Version English Bible, indicate clearly that the translators were as much confused upon the subject of the holy Spirit as are the majority of Christian people today.

In the passage above cited (1 John 2:27), the Apostle says, "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you all things, and is truth and is no lie, and even as it has taught you, ye shall abide in him." How Satan has used this mistranslation to befog the minds of the Lord's people and to make them believe contrary to the testimony of their own senses! To illustrate the subject, we mention an incident in our own experience.

A lady who had been attending our preaching for about a year ceased to be in attendance for about a year, when the following conversation, in substance, took place.

We said, "It is some time, Sister, since we had the pleasure of meeting you."

She replied, "Yes; I have not attended your meetings for about a year. I have now taken the holy Sprit to be my teacher;"—referring to the above Scripture.

We replied: "Well, Sister, you certainly have found an excellent teacher; and we trust that you are an attentive pupil, and that you are growing greatly in grace, in knowledge and in love."

She answered that she thought she had made considerable development.

We replied, "May we be excused for putting to you a very leading question along the line of your spiritual progress?"

Answer: "Yes, with pleasure."

We replied, "Our question then would be, How much and along what lines have you learned during the past year, in which you feel confident that the holy Spirit has been your teacher? Will you please mention something that you have learned during this year's instruction that you did not know before?"

The sister tried in vain to think of one solitary item of truth or grace acquired during the year, and we then said, "Dear Sister, if you are correct in supposing that you had the holy Spirit as a special and personal teacher in the very way that you think, then evidently from your own testimony you have been a very poor pupil and have learned nothing. Now, may we inquire how it was the year previous when you met with us for the study of the Lord's counsel?"

Her answer was that during the year previous she certainly had learned a great deal respecting the divine Word and plan along many lines. Nevertheless, she was so pleased with the thought that she needed no human assistance in the study of the Lord's Word, and that God operated upon her mind and treated her as a private pupil, and not as one of the general class of scholars, that she was seemingly puffed up with the thought and preferred to continue it rather than to have the truth in the Lord's way,—Not forgetting the assembling together for the building up of one another and the use of all the means which God would grant for the understanding of his Word. How many others claim thus to be private pupils of the holy Spirit without having anything creditable to show either in grace or knowledge, year after year.

This illustration is a representative of thousands of similar instances in which the adversary misleads those not sufficiently meek to accept the Lord's counsel in the Lord's way. No fact could be more plainly taught in the Lord's Word than that it was his intention to make use of human instrumentality, teachers, in the development of his church. Mark the Apostle's statement. (1 Cor. 12:28, 29) "God hath set [placed in position] some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?" We admit that many of these early gifts to the church passed away, but we hold that some of these were not intended to pass away until the church should be completed. In proof of this we refer to Eph. 4:8, 11-16, in which he says, speaking of our Lord Jesus and the giving of the holy Spirit to the church, "He gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, *until we all come in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man,—unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.*"

What then is the significance of this statement about there being "no need that any man teach you" but that "the same anointing teacheth you all things?" We answer, the Apostle has reference here to a particular matter described in a preceding verse. (1 John 2:18, 19) Some who had been believers in Christ had rejected him and had left the company of those who still believed. The Apostle is merely pointing out that those who had received the holy Spirit of the Lord should in this fact have sufficient proof to offset any arguments of the Adversary to the effect that Christ was an imposter. Since they had received the holy Spirit as a seal to their hearts and to their faith, it should be quite unnecessary for John or any one else to write to them an epistle, proving to them, or teaching them, that Jesus is the Son of God; for the anointing which they had received was proof positive of this fact, superior to any arguments that could be framed by any man. And to this all Christians will agree. But the passage has no reference whatever to general instruction in righteousness and in the Word of God and in the plan of salvation.

Another statement in the same connection (1 John 2:20) is similarly misread. It says, "Ye have an unction [an anointing or lubrication] from the Holy One and ye know all things." The passage thus rendered is very certain to be a stumbling block to many. If they do not "*know all things*," they are in doubt whether or not they have ever received the holy Spirit. If they claim that they *should know* all things and that they *do know* all things, they are very apt to convince their friends by such claims that they are somewhat unbalanced mentally. The passage however becomes very simple and very reasonable when properly translated thus: "Ye have the anointing of the Holy One and ye all know it." The one receiving the anointing should know it, whether others know it or not. And yet the character of this *anointing* has

been presented to the Christian mind in so confused a manner that the vast majority today do not know whether they have the anointing from the Holy One or not. Nor have they any idea what such an *anointing* would imply in their own personal experience. We may therefore profitably examine this subject together, "that we may know the things that are freely given unto us of God."

The word "anointing" and the word "unction" carry with them the thought of oiling, making smooth, lubricating. From earliest times God has used *oil* as a type of the holy Spirit: for instance, the kings of Israel, before being installed in office, were *anointed;* likewise the priesthood. (Exod. 30:22-32) Christ is the antitype not only of Israel's kings, but also of Israel's high priests—the two offices unite in him. And as we have already seen, "the Christ" according to divine arrangement is to be a composite body, the elect overcoming church, under Christ its glorious Head. Hence, the oil which was poured upon the head of the king and the priest in type, and which ran down over the entire person, represented the holy Spirit of God, poured out upon our Head, Christ Jesus, which subsequently reached the church which is his body, at Pentecost, and which has been flowing down ever since, anointing the various members of his "body" from that day to the present time.

And the antitype, the holy spirit upon God's elect, should be expected, in some respects at least, to resemble the type. As the effect in the type was to cause a shining of the face, so the antitype, the holy Spirit, is indeed the "oil of joy" which counteracts the spirit of heaviness in all those who receive it, causing their faces to shine and their hearts to rejoice with joy unspeakable. Oil was used in olden times for anointing the skin to give smoothness and softness and suppleness to the joints and muscles; so the holy spirit brings to all who are anointed with it a smoothness and softness of character and manner not previously theirs. The Apostle in explaining this holy Spirit, this Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of the truth, the Spirit of God, calls it Love; and properly so, for God is Love, and hence the Spirit of God must be a Spirit of love. Explaining the Spirit of love, the Apostle declares that it is the sum of all its graces. He enumerates some of these, calling them gentleness, meekness, patience, brotherly-kindness, affection, long-suffering; all these graces together, love. He likewise points out what characteristics are opposed to love and denominates them the carnal mind or disposition, whose characteristics are anger, malice, hatred, strife, vain-glory, emulations and all such works of the flesh and of the devil, which are contrary to the spirit of God but are elements of the spirit of the world.

As the Apostle John says, whoever has received the spirit of love, the holy Spirit or disposition, the Spirit of the Truth, has an unction, anointing, lubrication from the Holy One: for it has no other author: it is the spirit of God, which proceedeth and came forth from him, bestowed upon his faithful. As the Apostle further declares, "Ye [who have received it] *all know it.*"

The possession of this Spirit of love, the Spirit of the truth, is an evidence that the possessor has been begotten of God and is a child of God; and that if faithful to his Lord and Head, even unto the end, he will by and by be made a joint-heir in his kingdom. The possession of this spirit on the part of those who believe in the Lord Jesus as their Redeemer constitutes therefore, as the Apostle says, the seal of their adoption into God's family—"whereby ye are *sealed* unto the day of redemption [deliverance]." (Eph. 4:30) The absence of this unction or anointing, even tho accompanied with some knowledge of the truth, is an evidence that the heart has not been fully consecrated to the Lord; the will not fully resigned to his will and Word.

In the beginning of the Gospel age it was proper that the manifestation of divine favor should be not only through the *fruits* of the Spirit, faith, hope and love, but also that it should be manifested by outward *signs*, or "gifts" of the Spirit, —tongues, miracles, prophesyings, etc. And hence the Pentecostal blessing not only sealed the Lord's people with his Spirit of love, but also gave miraculous physical "gifts" to the church: they however soon passed away—the power to *communicate* those gifts being limited to the Apostles.

The spirit of the Law age was the spirit of justice. During that epoch God manifested the element of his character which we term justice, and his law, "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," was the one according to which the Jewish ideas formulated. But when in the fulness of time God manifested another element of his character, namely love, then that became the pattern,—the next lesson for all who would be taught of him to learn. "Herein was *manifested the love* of God, in that he gave his only begotten Son;" "in this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation [satisfaction] for our sins."—1 John 4:9, 10.

Accordingly, we find our Redeemer, who was filled with the holy Spirit of love himself, speaking as the mouthpiece of the Father and declaring, "A *new commandment* I give unto you, that ye love one another." We find him also explaining the law, and showing that while it signified justice, yet it could be fulfilled only by love. "Love is the fulfilling of the law." We hear him summing up the entire significance of all that had been taught to Israel, saying, (1) "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, mind, soul [being] and strength;" and (2) "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." The Apostle John and others of the Lord's disciples heard his wonderful teachings and witnessed his exemplification of this holy Spirit of love and marveled; but it was not their privilege to possess the same Spirit until Pentecost. Before that they received him and became his followers, disciples, and received some instruction respecting the way of life; but it was expedient for them that he should go away—that he should pay the ransom-price, be raised from the dead by the Father's power and ascend up on high to appear as their high-priest and make atonement for their sins —else the Comforter could not come, they could not receive and be begotten by the Spirit of the truth, the Spirit of love, the holy Spirit. (John 14:16, 17; 15:26; 16:7) And this is the declaration of the Apostle John, "As many as received him [Jesus], to them gave he power [privilege] to become the sons of God [beginning at Pentecost]; even to them that believe on his name: which were begotten [beginning at Pentecost] not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."—John 1:12, 13.

It was only natural and to be expected that the believers in the early church would overlook the most important blessing, the *sealing*, the anointing of the holy Spirit of love; and that they should think chiefly of the "gifts"—of tongues, healings, miracles, etc. It was therefore necessary that the Lord through the Apostle should call their attention to the fact that the *fruits* of the Spirit, faith, hope, love were the essentials, and not the tongues, miracles and other gifts. He says, "Yet show I unto you a more excellent way"—following after love, whose development and ripeness will be a gradual and progressive work. And the Apostle points out clearly that one might have all the various "gifts," healing-power, miraculous power, ability to speak with tongues, etc., yet if they did not possess in addition to these the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of the truth, the Spirit of love, they would be simply tinkling cymbals, sounding brasses—drums without spiritual life or vitality in any degree, and consequently without any proper hope respecting a future life or the kingdom.

If we have this holy Spirit, this anointing, this unction, we surely know it as a fact, whether or not we have always discerned it as being the Spirit of our adoption to the divine nature. However true it is that this holy Spirit is to be a gradual development in the Lord's people, a growth in grace, it is nevertheless equally true that it has a definite time of beginning. It *did not begin* when first we came to know the grace of God in Christ, in the precious blood shed for the forgiveness of our sins. With repentance and faith came *justification*, and its "joy and peace through believing;" but it was not until *later* that we had, by the same faith, "access into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of [sharing] the glory of God."—Rom. 5:1, 2.

This latter grace we attained only by learning to admire to some extent God's character of love. He invites us to consecrate ourselves fully to him, to lay aside and to sacrifice our own wills and to follow in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ, who did not his own will but the will of his Father who sent him: and it is when we reach this point of full-surrender of our own wills to the will of God that we may be purged of selfishness, the spirit of the world and of earthly ambitions, and be filled with the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of holiness, the Spirit of the truth, the Spirit of love. *Then* we are accepted of the Lord as "new creatures in Christ Jesus" and receive an impartation of his spirit of holiness, love, as the seal or mark of our acceptance—"being transformed by the renewing of our minds." Thenceforth, all holy things, the things of God and the people of God, as well as God himself, draw forth our hearts; no matter who they are nor under what circumstances, we love the Lord's people and everything which is in harmony with the Lord's Word and character. And correspondingly from the same

moment of full consecration we are the enemies and opponents of sin, we "hate every evil way" and everything sinful, mean, selfish, contemptible, and contrary to love, whether we find its stain upon our own flesh or upon others of the fallen race. Thenceforth it is our mission as new creatures to be representatives of God and his truth and his spirit of love, and all other considerations are secondary; and the language of the heart is:—

"Henceforth my chief concern shall be,
To live and speak and toil for Thee."

This is the new life, and from the time it begins we are reckoned as "new creatures in Christ Jesus; old things have passed away, all things have become new." But the new creature has various difficulties to contend with, all of which are permitted of divine providence for his development and perfecting, which will not be accomplished until he has proved faithful unto death, and in the first resurrection has been clothed with the spiritual body and its new conditions against which there will be no necessity for warfare. "But we [new creatures] that are in this tabernacle [present earthly conditions unfavorable to the new creature] do groan, being burdened [by the constant conflict with the powers of darkness as well as with the motions of sin in our own flesh and the contact with sin abounding on every hand]." The new creature finds in the present existence necessity for a continual battle between his flesh and himself as a new creature, an adopted and begotten son of God, whose disposition or spirit is one of holiness and love toward God and men; for he is opposed by inherited imperfections and depraved tendencies in his own physical system. Hence, he is obliged continually to recognize the two personalities, as the Apostle expresses it—the new "I" which loves God and men, especially the household of faith, and which desires holiness, seeks peace and endeavors daily to become more and more an exact copy of the Lord Jesus Christ; and the other "I," the natural man, which is *reckoned* dead, but which will not be actually gotten rid of until literal death; which continually seeks to obtrude its will and preference, and requires to be continually kept under by the new "I," in complete subjection to the will of God in Christ, to the holy spirit of love.—1 Cor. 9:27.

The beginning of this experience as a "new creature" varies somewhat with different individuals. The Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of love, has to a certain extent won favor with very many of the worldly, and many of these *to some extent*, conform their lives to it slightly, even tho they have never been begotten by it to a complete transformation of disposition. As a consequence, we find that the so-called "Christian *world*" which has not received the holy Spirit as a comforting and guiding influence, nor as a seal or mark of adoption into the divine family, has nevertheless adopted some of the outward features of the holy spirit of love as its standard, and outwardly at least has been blessed thereby. For instance, *gentleness* is one element of the holy Spirit, and some people who are thoroughly worldly have cultivated this grace of gentleness to a very large extent and are pleased to be known as gentlemen and ladies (gentlewomen). Indeed, amongst a certain class of thoroughly worldly people for one to say to the other, You are not a gentleman, sir! or You are not a lady, madam! would be a sure method of arousing anger, malice, hatred, strife and various other qualities which would prove beyond question that the persons so jealous of their reputation for gentleness are really devoid of the *spirit* of love, and hence, that their gentleness is not a fruitage of the holy Spirit within, but is merely an outward adornment, fastened on externally.

Similarly, we have noticed business men exercise wonderful *patience* in dealing with unreasonable customers, and many have marveled how they attained so good a degree of proficiency in patience, and self-control; but perhaps after the customer had been served, cordially shaken hands with and bidden good-bye, those who were near have heard the burst of passion and indignation, accompanied perhaps with profanity, which indicated that the *patience* and *self-control* manifested were merely from a love of money, and not the fruitage of love, the holy spirit. In society, the lady who is very gentle in manner and in word, and very patient, and who perhaps manifests her love with much gusto and a kiss and with many gentle and affable manners, will sometimes in private reveal the fact that such conduct was not the fruitage or result of having her heart filled with the holy Spirit of love, but was merely a display on the surface of carefully cultivated gracious manners; the heart perhaps revealed its true condition privately in speaking evil of the one on whom kisses and demonstrations of affectionate love had been showered but a few moments before.

With the "new creature," *begotten* of the Spirit of love, matters are wholly different: the demonstrations of love for God in worship are not outward formalities or mere habits of worship, but the homage of the heart, which delights to not only outwardly worship, but to bow before the Lord in secret and to serve him with its very best of time, influence, voice or other means. Its love for humanity is genuine, sincere, also: it loves chiefly amongst men those who have the most of the Lord's likeness in their characters; and whether rich or poor, learned or unlearned, the mark of divine acceptance, the seal of the *Spirit of the Lord* upon any, is quite sufficient to draw out for such love and interest and service according to the necessities and the opportunities—as unto the Lord. Even toward the worldly and the wicked (who are not knowingly and willfully wicked) there is a sympathy, an appreciation of the blindness of their minds which has come from the god of this world, and which hinders them from appreciating the goodness of God and the beauties of his character. Feeling a sympathy for these and for all who are under the distresses of the "curse," the new spirit, the loving or holy Spirit, prompts them not only to "love unfeigned" for the "brethren," but to sympathy unfeigned for the entire "groaning creation." From this condition springs their gentleness to all, their patience with all, their kindness and moderation and long-suffering, love. But these who have the true spirit of love and who in this have an evidence that they "have passed from death unto life,"—that they have the Spirit of Christ, without which they would be none of his, that they have been "sealed with the holy Spirit of promise" as the earnest or beginning of the new nature,—these are the few exceptions even amongst those who have named the name of Christ.

It need not be surprising to us that all Christians have not exactly the same experience in reaching the beginning of this *spirit-begotten* condition, with its renewed mind. Let us remember that some are born into Christian families where the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of love, has been to a considerable extent recognized: either the outward graces of gentleness, patience, brotherly-kindness, etc., have been set up as home rules and standards, and have helped to bring blessing and peace, or the true spirit of love itself, has control of one or more influential in the family, in whom these various graces are a natural fruitage or outgrowth, which makes some impression on each member of the family. Those who are born and reared under such favorable conditions, and who thus have learned to appreciate love and to practice it to some slight extent, are indeed highly favored. Yet nevertheless, when they shall have reached years of discretion and personal judgment, and after they have confirmed with their maturer thoughts the faith of childhood respecting the redemption which God has accomplished through Christ, each should come to the point of making a definite, positive and everlasting covenant with the Lord,—presenting himself a living sacrifice to him, to his truth and to his service. Understanding that this means the dethronement of self, and the enthronement in their heart of the will of the Lord, as instead of their own will, not only as respects evil things, but in respect to every matter, such thereby become new creatures in Christ Jesus; consecrated and accepted as members of "the church which is his body," and as heirs of God, joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, their Lord, if so be that they will "suffer with him that they may also be glorified together" with him. When such a young person, brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord shall have thus completed his covenant by laying himself upon the altar of the Lord, he will be sealed with the holy Spirit of love: he will feel a broader and a deeper love both for God and for his fellows, than he ever before experienced. Nevertheless, in his case the change will be less sharply defined than in the case of one differently born and reared—one reared under the influence of undiluted sin and selfishness; who, believing in Christ as his Redeemer and repenting of sin, subsequently presents himself a living-sacrifice to the Lord. With the latter, the change from feelings of hatred, envy, strife and selfishness, suddenly giving place to warm, loving devotion to the Lord and sympathy and love for fellow-creatures, would be a great and much more startling experience. Hence some of these latter, if of a demonstrative turn, may sing or weep for joy and feel like embracing everybody near them, when first they receive of the Spirit of love and holiness.

But while the Apostle's statement of the matter must always be true, that those who have received the anointing from the Holy One "all *know it" themselves*—can readily discern the change of their own sentiments—it is also true that it should not be very long after they received it and know it, before others should know it also. The Lord has indicated one particular way in which he desires every new creature, whose

will has been baptized into the will of Christ and who has received of the holy Spirit of love and who has become a new creature in Christ, pledged to walk in newness of life, to indicate this change to others; namely, by an immersion in water, as a symbol of the consecration and immersion of the will; and while this should be promptly attended to as a confession before fellow-creatures, yet such a confession would not be a sure sign of the new life: for many have thus confessed "newness of life" whose living epistles seem to contradict this.

When, however, the holy Spirit is received into the heart as the actuating principle of a life guided and instructed by the counsel of the Lord, it will not only obey the Lord in the matter of symbolic immersion, but it will also soon manifest itself in the various affairs of life, to those with whom the "new creature" comes in contact. The *anointing* which comes upon the Lord's people must soon or later affect their outward conduct by manifestations of greater meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly kindness, affection and generosity of word and deed. All of this is in the illustration of the anointing oil which typifies the Spirit from which we have an *unction* or *anointing* or *lubrication*. But this lubricating and mollifying of character will come slowly, gradually, and we must not expect a miracle or as sudden a change in our earthen vessels as we had in the spirit of our minds: nevertheless, the "new creature," the renewed will, is to control the earthly body and impart its spirit and disposition to it, so far as possible, and should begin the work at once. If the new mind or spirit or disposition of love for God and man dwells in us richly, as new creatures, it will speedily begin to lubricate, make smooth and unctious the earthen vessel.

In this day of machinery all have some knowledge of it and of why machinists put oil upon all its joints and bearings: it is in order that it may operate with the greater ease and perform its duties the more perfectly. Without the oil the tendency would be for the various parts to bind and produce friction, heat and wear: with the oil, the mechanism will perform its duties much better than without it. Nevertheless, as we all know, machines are of various degrees of perfection and imperfection, hence while the oil will be of advantage to every machine, it will not produce the same evenness and smoothness of motion in every part of each. And so it is amongst Christians: while every Christian will be blessed by the holy Spirit, the unction, anointing and lubrication from the Holy One, through the Spirit of love received, nevertheless all Christians will not be alike smooth, regular, moderate, gentle, long suffering, tenderly affectionate one toward another in love. The anointed heart or will can be, will be, must be striving for perfecting in love and actuated by it as a motive power, but the outward working of this upon the natural body, the outward man, will vary according to its natural makeup and its rooting in selfishness—sin. The man or woman who was naturally bad tempered, cross, selfish, hateful, mean, will be *helped* from the time the anointing of the holy Spirit of love is received; yet it may be weeks or months or years before the friction in certain parts of the disposition is worn smooth; and it should be the constant effort of every "new creature in Christ," first of all to be sure that he has received the unction, the Spirit of love, and secondly to grow in that spirit and grace, to be filled with the spirit of love, letting the Spirit of Christ dwell in him richly and abound, and thirdly he should constantly and earnestly strive to let the light he has received so shine before men that they may see his good works, that they may see that the Spirit of Christ has produced in him a great change and an increasing change toward meekness, gentleness, patience, brotherly kindness, benevolence, in all the workings and operations of life, that thus he may glorify God in his body and in his spirit (new mind) which, with all he has, are given to the Lord by voluntary consecration as well as being his by redemption.

Whatever friction may be unavoidable between the new creature and the world, which has a different spirit and which therefore operates along different lines and on different principles, there should be no friction amongst those who are the Lord's people, and who have all received of the same Spirit. We recall the Apostle's words respecting the body of Christ in which he urges that even the speaking of the truth should be done in love one for another; that we "may grow up into him in all things, which is the Head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted, by that which every joint supplieth [lubrication] according to the *effectual working of every part in its own place*, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (Eph. 4:15, 16) The Apostle's thought seems to be that while each new creature may be considered as a complete member of Christ, and have all the parts of his own character thoroughly lubricated with the spirit of love, yet in addition to this all the new creatures are to recognize themselves as members one of another, and of the body of Christ, the church; and are to exercise toward each other in their various efforts toward coöperation in obedience to the will of the Lord, such love, such unction, such anointing, such lubrication, as will prevent friction and enable the whole body of Christ to coöperate for its own upbuilding in the graces as well as for its own completion in numbers.

This same thought is brought to our attention through the Prophet David, who, after saying, "How good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity," adds: "It is like the precious ointment upon the head"—the anointing oil upon the typical priest, Aaron, representing the holy Spirit upon the royal priesthood, head and body.—Psa. 133.

"HE THAT HUMBLETH HIMSELF SHALL BE EXALTED"

DEC. 5.—PHIL. 2:1-11.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."—Phil. 2:5.

The exhortations of this lesson are taken from the Apostle's letter to the church at Philippi. It will be remembered that this church was the first one founded in Europe: the particulars connected with its small beginning were noted in our lessons for July 4th and 11th. Referring to the smallness of its beginning Dr. McLaren, commenting upon the account of how the Apostle and his companions found outside the city by the river bank a place of resort for prayer and "spake unto the women which resorted thither," says:

"Not blowing of trumpets, not beating of drums of any sort. A few women and some worn-out travelers talking together by the banks of the rushing river. How scornfully the great folk of Philippi would have smiled if they had been told that the chief title of their city to be remembered at all would be the presence in it of that one insignificant Jew, and his letter to the church founded on that morning!"

The Apostle indirectly reveals something respecting the general character of the Philippian church in the epistle written to it: we find in it nothing like reproof or correction, as we find in most of the epistles written to other churches by the same Apostle. It is a particularly beautiful and loving letter, and indicates a very close sympathetic bond between the Apostle and this church in particular. Moreover, this church on four different occasions that we know of rendered the Apostle practical sympathy by financial assistance, as well as by words of comfort and cheer. While at Thessalonica he twice received their gifts in his support; again while he was at Corinth they ministered to him, and again when he was a prisoner in Rome they did not forget him. It was their messenger, Epaphroditus, who brought this last memorial of their love, who was "sick unto death"—probably prostrated by the malarial fever. On his recovery the Apostle Paul sent back with him this beautiful letter known to us as the The Epistle to the Philippians. (Phil. 2:25-28; 4:14-19; 2 Cor. 11:9) The other churches may possibly have ministered to the Apostle also, but if so the fact is not recorded; apparently they missed a great opportunity, and we may be sure that while the Apostle did urge them to contribute to the relief of the brethren at Jerusalem, during a period of famine, he would not make a request for personal assistance, however much he may have been in need, or however much he might have appreciated even small manifestations of their love for him and the cause he served.

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The lesson before us respecting Christian humility does not intimate that this grace was lacking among the Philippians, but that the Apostle recognized it as being one of the most important of all the graces, and one which required *continual* cultivation, in order to a continual growth in the likeness of Christ. The opening words of this lesson are an exhortation to brotherly love and affection amongst themselves. He says, If there be any consolation in Christ, if there be any comfort of love to those who are in him, if they have any heart, if they have any mercies—as though he would put them to the test whether or not any would deny that these graces appertain to all who have come into Christ as new creatures. Then, as though they had assented to his proposition, conceding that there is comfort, love, fellowship, sympathy and consolation in

Christ for one another, he adds: You can fill my joy full by being thus minded toward each other—having love for each other, being in sympathy and accord with each other, and having one mind or purpose or will as a church, the Lord's will. How grand an expression this is, his joy would be filled merely by knowing of their sympathy and love for him, not by knowing of their professions of love for the Lord, but by knowing that they loved, sympathized with and consoled *one another*, in the proper fellowship of the members of the body of Christ! This would fill his joy more full than anything else that he could know respecting them. Likewise, we may be sure the same conditions would be most pleasing and most acceptable in the sight of our Lord and Saviour. The Apostle John had the same thought respecting brotherly love in the church as an indication of its godliness, when he says: "He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?"—1 John 4:20.

To this end—that such a spirit of perfect unity and fellowship might obtain amongst the believers at Philippi, Paul exhorts that all shall cultivate the grace of humility, and that in every affair each shall take heed that "nothing be done through strife or vain glory," that self-laudation and strivings for preëminence be thoroughly put away as the greatest enemies to the spirit of the Lord and the blessing of the church. On the contrary, each should have that lowliness of mind which can see the good qualities of fellow-members and appreciate some of these qualities at least as superior to his own. Lowliness of mind does not necessarily signify an ignorance of any talents or graces which we ourselves may possess; but so long as the church is in the present imperfect or tabernacle condition, the perfection of all the graces, and all the talents, and all the abilities, need never be expected in any one person in any congregation. So, then, each one may, if he be of lowly mind, see in others certain good qualities or graces superior to his own and should delight to recognize these and to esteem their possessor accordingly.

For each one to look merely upon his own things, interests, welfare or talents and to ignore these in others would manifest a general selfishness, and consequently a dearth of the Spirit of Christ, which is a spirit of love and generosity. In proportion as we are filled more and more with the holy Spirit, love, we will find ourselves interested in the welfare of others. This was the mind, disposition or Spirit which was in our dear Redeemer—which he so wonderfully manifested, which we must copy and develop in our characters if we would ultimately be of the "little flock" who shall be joint-heirs with Christ in his glory: concerning whom God has predestinated that to be accepted with him to this position they must be "*copies* of his Son."—Rom. 8:29.

That we may partially discern how our Lord Jesus exemplified this spirit of humility, the Apostle briefly sums up in few words the story of his humiliation and how it led to his present exaltation. He points out to us that when our Lord Jesus was a spirit being, before he stooped to take our nature and to bear the penalty of our sin, he was in "a form of God" —a spirit form, a high and glorious condition. But instead of being moved selfishly to ambitiously grasp for higher things than those which God had conferred upon him—instead of seeking to set up a rival empire as did Satan—he did not meditate a robbery of God to make himself his equal (Satan's course), saying: "I will ascend above the stars [the bright ones, the angelic hosts]; I will be *as* the Most High [his peer, his equal]." Quite to the contrary of this, our Lord Jesus, "the beginning of the creation of God," was willing in harmony with the Father's plan to humble himself, to take a *lower* nature and to do a work which would imply not only a great deal of humiliation, but also a great deal of pain and suffering. The Apostle points out how the "Only Begotten" proved his willingness and humility by complying with this arrangement; and that after he became a man he continued of the same humble spirit, willing to carry out the divine plan to the very letter, by dying as man's ransom-price; and not only so, when it pleased the Father to require that the death should be a most ignominious one in every respect, perhaps beyond the requirements of the ransom merely, he did not draw back, but said: "Thy will not mine be done," and stooped even to the ignominious "death of the cross."

Here, as the Apostle points out, we have the most wonderful demonstration of humility, meekness and obedience to God that ever was manifested or that could be conceived of. And this is the pattern the Apostle points out that we should seek to copy. "Let this same [humble] mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."

It was on account of this humility which enabled him to render perfect obedience, that the heavenly Father has so highly honored our dear Redeemer as to raise him from the dead to the *divine nature*, to a station far above angels, principalities and powers, and every name that is named. That this is his argument is shown (verse 9) by the word "wherefore;" *i. e.*, on this account, on account of this humility just described, God hath highly exalted him.

Not only did our Lord's beautiful and perfect humility and obedience demonstrate that he was loyal to the core to the heavenly Father, but it also demonstrated that in him the Father's Spirit, love, dwelt richly, for he shared the Father's love for the race he redeemed. On this account also he is found worthy to be the divine agent in the blessing of all the families of the earth, as per the terms of the divine covenant made with father Abraham. Thus he has become the head of the "Seed of Abraham," which is to bless the race redeemed; and hence it will be to him that every knee shall bow and every tongue confess, when Jehovah's "due time" shall come for the pouring out of divine blessings upon the redeemed world—that all may come to a knowledge of the truth and, if they will, into full harmony with God, and to eternal life.

The Apostle not only holds up the Lord Jesus as the great example of a proper humility, self-abnegation and obedience to God in the interest of others, but he would also hold up before us the reward, the high exaltation of our Lord by the Father, the result or reward of his obedience, that we also might be encouraged, and realize that, if faithful in following the footsteps of our Redeemer and sacrificing the advantages of the present to serve the Lord and his cause, then, in due time, we also may expect to be glorified with him and to share his name and throne and work, as members of his anointed body, his church, his joint-heir.

In the succeeding verses (12-16) the Apostle gives a most beautiful tribute to the church at Philippi, while urging them to continue on and to make more and more progress in the race-course in which they had already started, working out in themselves through humility and obedience the character, the disposition of Christ, with fear and trembling, and thus working out each his own share in the great salvation to glory, honor and immortality which God hath promised.

We cannot work out our own justification; but being justified by the blood of Christ, and being called with the heavenly calling, we can make our calling and election sure; we can work out our own share in the great salvation to which we have been called in Christ, by giving heed to the instructions of the Lord; by following the pattern which he has set for us. Not that we will attain perfection in the flesh, but merely perfection of will, of intention, of heart; and keeping the body under to the extent of our ability, its weaknesses and imperfections will be reckoned as covered by the merit of our Lord, the holy One.

It is encouraging also for us to know that this warfare is not merely one of our own, against weakness and sin; but that God is for us, has called us, and is helping us. He already works in us, by his Word of promise, and has led us thus far in the *willing* and the *doing* of his will, his good pleasure; and he will continue thus to lead and to help us and to work in us by his Word of truth, if we will continue to give heed to his counsel. "Sanctify them through thy truth —thy Word is truth." The Gospel is "the power of God unto salvation" to every one that so accepts it; and no greater stimulus to true godliness can be found than the "exceeding great and precious promises [given unto us]; that *by these* ye might be partakers of the divine nature."—2 Pet. 1:4.

Moreover, in following in the footsteps of our Lord Jesus, running the race for the great prize set before us in the Gospel, we are not to *murmur* by the way, finding fault with its difficulties and narrowness; nor are we to *dispute* respecting it, nor to seek to have any other way than that which divine providence marks out before us, realizing that the Lord knows exactly what experiences are necessary to our development in the school of Christ, and realizing also that if obedience were possible, while our mouths are full of complaints and dissatisfaction with the Lord and our lot which he has permitted, it would indicate that we were at least out of sympathy with the spirit of his arrangement; and such an obedience, if it were possible (but it would not be possible), would not meet the divine approval, nor gain us the prize. Hence, as the Apostle exhorts, we should "Do all things without murmurings and disputings; that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, . . . holding forth the Word of life in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world."

PAUL'S DYING WORDS

DEC. 12.—2 TIM. 4:8, 16-18.

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course: I have kept the faith."—2 Tim. 4:7.

Paul wrote these his dying words to Timothy, whom he dearly loved, and frequently refers to as his son. He was in prison in the city of Rome, and is supposed to have been sixty-three years of age at this time. His imprisonment in Rome referred to in a previous lesson, when he was permitted to live in "his own hired house," had terminated by his being released from custody; and it is supposed that during the period of his release, about three years, he revisited some of the churches previously established, and also carried the Gospel into Spain.

It was during this interim of his freedom that the great persecution arose in Rome under Nero. That brutal Emperor is supposed to have caused the city of Rome to be set on fire that he might witness a great conflagration from the tower of his palace, or possibly with a view to having it rebuilt in a more modern style, a monument to himself. But the losses occasioned by this fire, which could not be gotten under control for six days, and which laid a large portion of the city in ashes, stirred up so great a commotion amongst the people, so aroused their anger, that he thought it discreet to let the blame be laid at the door of Christianity—the charge being that the Christians were the incendiaries and responsible for the great destruction wrought. Following out this line of policy, Nero began a terrible persecution of Christians, thus directing the suspicion of the people away from himself and against those who had taken the name of Christ: who were unpopular anyway with the wicked and the idolatrous. Multitudes were slain with the sword, exposed in the amphitheaters to be torn by wild beasts, or covered with the skins of wild beasts to be torn to pieces by dogs, while some were wrapped in sheets covered with pitch and tied to stakes and set on fire as torches, to illuminate Nero's garden.

This persecution commenced shortly after Paul's release from his first imprisonment in Rome; and the spirit of bitter persecution thus aroused was still hot, when, three years later, he was again arrested. This time, as he explains in the words of this lesson (verses 16-18), it would appear that he had a public examination, possibly before Nero himself; but the fear of the people was so great, and quite probably the Apostle's language so bold, that he was forsaken of all, as was his Master when before Pilate. He tells us, nevertheless, that he had with him the Lord's presence, which strengthened him to such an extent that he spoke the Word with a boldness which permitted the Gospel to be fully known to the Gentiles thereabouts. He evidently was more anxious to make known the "good tidings" than to preserve himself from pain and death. He was a true and noble soldier of the cross—a close follower in the foosteps of our great chief Captain, Christ Jesus. Paul's prison was a very uncomfortable place, we may be sure. We visited the place which tradition points out in the city of Rome as being the place of his incarceration. It is a dungeon below the surface, dark, damp and extremely forbidding. But notwithstanding all this, the reader must be struck with the tone of triumph which pervades the Apostle's writings from there. What else than the power of God could so sustain an able and cultured man under the various trials and vicissitudes through which he passed, including this his last imprisonment and his final execution, which followed shortly after the writing of this epistle to Timothy? He was spared from crucifixion by reason of being a Roman citizen, and instead he was beheaded, says tradition.

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In the light of the foregoing circumstances, Paul's charge to Timothy is, so to speak, his dying message; and so regarded, its solemnity and impressiveness are increased before our minds. What was this dying charge? It was that Timothy should be diligent, zealous in preaching the Word of God; that considerations of his own convenience should be entirely set aside and every opportunity for declaring the message of God's love in Christ availed.

As considerations moving to this end the Apostle mentions first the Father, God—his approval; and second, the Lord Jesus Christ, the appointed Judge of all, living and dead, at his appearing and kingdom. Only when moved by all of these considerations, can the preaching of the Gospel be *most* effectual. He who does not believe in God the Father and in his Son, our Lord Jesus, could not preach the Gospel at all; and even though believing in the Father and the Son, no man can really preach the good tidings intelligently who does not believe also that the Son has been appointed by the Father to judge the world in the appointed Millennial day (Acts 17:31), and that this judgment of the world will be at (during) his manifestation and kingdom at his second advent.

The Apostle explains that as a minister of the grace of God, this declaration of the Gospel may include three features; (1) reproof, (2) rebuke, (3) exhortation. But it is safe to caution all of the Lord's people against a too liberal use of the first two features. In order to reprove properly, the heart should be very full of love and sympathy; else the reproofs and rebukes may be sharp, and possibly do more harm than good. Even with the heart full of love, it requires a head that is exceedingly well-balanced to be able to make use of reproofs and rebukes to good advantage to those who really need them. And herein God's people are to be wise as serpents, harmless as doves. Exhortation is the form of faithfulness which quite evidently can best be used by the majority of the Lord's people. And even it, as well as the other efforts, should be characterized by patience, longsuffering, brotherly kindness.

Another point to be noticed is, that it is the Word of God that is to be preached and not the word of man. However God may use human instrumentalities in expounding his Word, the distinction between the Word of the Lord and the word of the expounder is to be continually recognized. Moreover, all this is to be done with "doctrine," better translated as in the Revised Version, "teaching." The Apostle links "teaching" with "long-suffering and patience," and gives us the thought that he who would be a successful servant of the Lord, really helpful to the Lord's flock, will be willing to dispense the message "line upon line, precept upon precept. here a little and there a little," as a teacher; backing up the Word of the Lord with reason, and exemplification in his own life in connection with the exhortations, etc.

This message to Timothy, who was a public minister, would of course have special force and application to all who are endeavoring to feed "the flock over which the holy spirit hath made them overseers" (Acts 20:28); but it applies to all who are truly the Lord's, every one of whom is to be a preacher of righteousness, a servant of the truth, "holding forth the Word of life" to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness.

In this connection the Apostle prophesies, as in some other instances, and foretells a future day when sound teaching would not be endured by those avowing themselves to be followers of Christ. Prophetically, he points out the great falling away which culminated in the organization of papacy. This reached a fulfilment very quickly after the death of the Apostles. Teachers assumed to be a separate class and designated themselves "clergy," branding all others "laity." And this seemed to be more generally pleasing to the carnal mind than the divine arrangement. The people preferred that some one else should do their thinking and studying for them, rather than be merely their helpers or teachers, respecting the Word of the Lord. Thus darkness more and more dense came on the church, resulting in the establishment of the great "abomination" noted in the Scriptures.* The minds of the people were turned away from the truth to fables, from the study of God's Word to the doing of penances and vain repetitions of prayer; from faith in the precious blood of Christ, as the continual and only and ever acceptable sacrifice for sins, they turned to "the mass" and its fresh and oft-repeated sacrifices for sins. Instead of walking by faith, the minds of the people were turned to fables respecting sacred relics and wonderful cures wrought by these—nails from the cross, pieces of the cross, bones of saints, etc., etc. So completely were they turned to fables that for centuries the Word of God was wholly neglected; and that period is known in civil history as "the dark ages."

Although a great Reformation set in and the Word of God reappeared amongst the people, and, although the preaching of it has brought great blessing and liberty to the people since, nevertheless the adversary still perverts the truth, and induces God's people to separate themselves, the one from the other, and thus to destroy the force and value of the Reformation and the influence of God's Word. Satan's present methods are suited to the occasion: he cannot prevent the circulation of the Scriptures, but he can blind with prejudice and superstition the minds of those who read, and see that what they read will profit them little: this is his present method of procedure. Under sectarianism he endeavors to offset the testimony of God's Word with the declarations of faith in the various creeds of Christendom.

The Apostle's words are as forceful as ever for all who would be ministers of the Word of God and not of the traditions of men; with all who would have their works stand in this day of fiery trial into which we are coming. To all such

* See MILLENNIAL DAWN, VOL. II, Chap. 9; VOL. III, Chap. 4.

the Apostle's words to Timothy have a special appropriateness—"Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist [a teacher and expounder of the Gospel and not of human tradition]."

How humble and yet how confident are the closing words of the great Apostle's testimony (verses 6-8), "I have fought a good fight," etc. He did not boast of perfection in his flesh, but on the contrary disclaimed it, saying that he had constant need to keep his body "under," in subjection to the new mind. He did not boast of how many churches he had established, nor how many converts he had made and baptized. He did not boast of his knowledge of the Lord's Word, nor of his ability as a speaker, nor of how many epistles he had written, nor of his imprisonments and sufferings for the sake of the Gospel. His boast, on the contrary, was simply that he had fought well, fought faithfully, fought the best he was able, against sin abounding on every hand and weaknesses in himself. His boast was not that he had made a faith, nor that he had expressed the Gospel in the most clear and positive manner which would descend generations after him to glorify God and to bless his people; but his boast merely was that he had "kept the faith," the faith which God through his Word had inspired, the faith which he had received, and was given to all of the Lord's people; he had kept it, he had been faithful to it, he had not bartered it for a mess of pottage, earthly advantages.

On the strength of these two points—his having kept the Word of the Lord's testimony obediently, and his having fought in defense of it to the end of his course, to the best of his ability—on the strength of these two things he builds his hope for the crown of rejoicing in the kingdom with the Redeemer and his faithful at his appearing.

What an encouragement is here for the very humblest of God's people; not by intellectual or physical strength, not by wonderful works, not by anything that we can do or have done for the Lord, his cause, and his people, are we to hope for eternal glory; but simply with the Apostle we are to seek to use what talents we do possess and what opportunities the Lord provides for us, faithfully. We are to keep the faith, not denying the faith under any consideration—not to secure the favor of any, nor to avoid the frowns of any, may we be unfaithful to the Word of God's testimony. We, too, are to fight the good fight against selfishness in its every phase, especially in ourselves, and to develop in ourselves more and more under the Lord's instruction, his Spirit, the Spirit of love.—John 13:34, 35; 1 Cor. 13:13.

INTERESTING LETTERS

For the encouragement of our readers, and as showing that there are still opportunities for service in the colporteur work, we publish a letter from a dear brother who is employed all day in business, but spends what time he can in the evenings in spreading the knowledge of the truth among the people in his city:

Minnesota.

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL:—Enclosed please find our report for DAWNS delivered the past thirty days. It is simply wonderful how the dear Lord is blessing every effort here put forth to spread the good news. Considering the few hours employed in this service, he seems to be leading me in many of the smallest details of his work so as to get the best possible result in the least possible time. Blessed be his name forever!

The last month has far overtopped my highest expectations in DAWN work, 272 Vols. being delivered. May we pray God always to keep us humble, so he may condescend to accept our sacrifices, not because of their own, but because of Christ's merit. May the Lord's richest blessings rest upon you and yours is my prayer. Yours in the Redeemer,

M. P. THORI.

Wisconsin.

TO THE AUTHOR OF MILLENNIAL DAWN:

DEAR BROTHER:—Having been very much interested in the reading of the DAWN, and particularly of Vol. 5, which I am now reading, and feeling that it contains an amount of information from every source which, if true or trustworthy, is of the greatest value, and finding that many feel disposed to question the reliability of the figures you give, I take the liberty to ask you for some direct word of assurance along this line. I am a class leader in the M. E. church of this place and have charge of other work in the county, and feel anxious about these things. Please kindly give me such words of assurance as you can. Yours in Christ,

H. D. WHITE.

[Reply.—All the quotations and statistics given in Vol. 5 of DAWN are properly credited to their respective authors, and stand or fall on the merits of those authors and on their veracity. We did not put into the book anything which we thought could reasonably be questioned, and you will notice by going over the names of the various journals and persons quoted that they are nearly all well known and of international reputation.—EDITOR.]

VOL. XVIII ALLEGHENY, PA., DECEMBER 15, 1897 No. 24

SONGS IN THE HOUSE OF OUR PILGRIMAGE

"Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage."—Psa. 119:54.

God's people during the Jewish dispensation as well as during the Gospel dispensation are spoken of as "pilgrims and strangers" in the "present evil world." They are such, because they have heard of "a better country," whose ruler is God, and whose law is love—"the perfect law of liberty." To such pilgrims the strife for wealth and vain glory, the pride, haughtiness and tinsel that everywhere prevail now, are distasteful; while the battle for wealth or position, especially when it leads to unrighteousness, oppression, slander, envy, strife and every evil work, is repulsive. Having obtained a glimpse of the perfection of divine character with its absoluteness of justice and love, it has become their ideal: and they have heard "the voice of him that speaketh from heaven," instructing them that sin and evil shall not always prevail, but that the God of heaven by and by shall set up his kingdom which will renovate and bless the world of mankind, and bring in everlasting righteousness. Since they have heard this, and the more they learn to appreciate it, the more, necessarily, they are out of harmony with the contrary conditions of the present time. Hence it is that they feel themselves, and are portrayed in the Scriptures as being, pilgrims and strangers who seek the fairer clime of the coming age.

It was in this view of matters that the Apostle declared that Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were "pilgrims and strangers on the earth," who sought a better country, a home under more righteous conditions. They sojourned in the very land promised to them, but it was not their "home;" because it was still in the hands and under the government of those who were aliens and strangers from God. They waited for the fulfillment of God's promise to give them that country under his divine blessing and laws, when it would become to them a heavenly country, a country under heavenly direction and blessing. They were obliged to wait for two reasons: first, as a test and development of their own faith and trust in the Great Promiser; and secondly, because "the wickedness of the Amorites was not yet come to the full."—Gen. 15:16.

Commenting on this, the Apostle declares that if they had been mindful, *i. e.*, wishful, to have returned to Charran, their own country prior to the promise of Canaan, they might have returned to it,—when they found the land of promise still occupied by other peoples, and that God was *not yet ready to fulfil* to them his promises. (Heb. 11:15) But they preferred to hold on to God's promises, and chose accordingly, for the time, to be pilgrims and strangers in the land of promise. Stephen in his discourse (Acts 7:2, 5) points out this pilgrimage and sojourn, as strangers, of Abraham and his seed—waiting for possession of the promised land. Stephen says, 'God gave him none inheritance in it: no, not so much as to set his foot on: yet he promised that he *would give it to him* for a possession, and to his seed after him."

We are to understand, accordingly, that the heavenly country for which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and all the faithful of the fleshly house of Israel waited as "pilgrims and strangers" is after all to be earthly, in the sense of being *on the earth;* but it will be heavenly in the sense that its government, regulations, laws, etc., will be heavenly laws, etc., and not "earthly, sensual, devilish." Consequently, when the Apostle says that they "looked for a city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God;" and that God

"hath prepared for them a city," we must understand this promise, so far as they are concerned, to be in harmony with the other promises made to fleshly Israel.

The "city" referred to is not a literal city, but the symbolical one mentioned in Rev. 21:2, 9-27. In symbol a city signifies a government, and this city which comes down from God out of heaven symbolizes the kingdom of God, his rule or government, which will be established in all the earth. This "city" or government will consist of The Christ—the "Bridegroom" and "the bride the Lamb's wife." "Then shall the righteous shine forth"—the city will have the glory of God. When this kingdom is established, the nations* shall walk in the light of it.—Rev. 21:24.

Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the faithful pilgrims and strangers prior to the atonement, while they will not be members of the bride company nor of the new Jerusalem, the kingdom, will nevertheless be very closely identified with it in the work of blessing the world of mankind in general. And hence it is that they are represented as waiting for this "city," this government which God will establish in the world; preferring to have their inheritance at that time, and under the blessing and bright illumination of that heavenly city or government, rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. It is in harmony with this thought that we are taught to pray, "Thy kingdom [the heavenly Jerusalem, the city which hath for foundations the twelve apostles—Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone] come! Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." This city will shine and bless the world until all the *willing* shall be helped and reconciled to God. Its reign will be for a thousand years, after which a new dispensation will open, under new conditions, in which mankind (perfected) will be granted the privilege of ruling themselves in harmony with the divine law.

In a certain sense then we might designate the present era, "the present evil world," to be the general house of our pilgrimage for all who love and long for righteousness; and the better condition of the future, the "new heavens and the new earth" promised as the heavenly home or condition which will be found abundantly satisfactory to all who shall attain thereto.

"OUR EARTHLY HOUSE" AND "OUR HOUSE FROM HEAVEN"

Nevertheless, the Apostle Paul (2 Cor. 5:1-10) writing concerning this pilgrimage and addressing specially the consecrated church of the Gospel age, uses language which, while not out of harmony with what we have just seen, foregoing, may be nevertheless properly understood to refer to the present mortal bodies of the saints, as their houses of pilgrimage—their temporary houses, while on the way to their permanent homes, the spiritual bodies which God hath promised to them that love him, and which the same apostle described to the same readers in a previous epistle.—1 Cor. 15:38, 42-45.

Moreover, since we well know that very much in the Psalms was written prophetically, respecting the Christ, Head and body, the overcoming church of the Gospel age, we may well infer that the language of our text had special reference to these pilgrims of the Gospel age. The Apostle says, "We know that if our earthly house of this temporary dwelling place were dissolved, we have a permanent structure of God, a house not made with hands [not produced by human powers] everlasting in the heavens." Since the renewed earth, altho it will be a permanent house for the world of mankind, will not be "in the heavens;" and since the church when granted their new spiritual bodies in the resurrection will be thereafter everlastingly in the higher or heavenly condition, it seems but proper to construe the Apostle's language as relating to the earthly bodies and the heavenly bodies of the church. And such an application seems to fit his discourse throughout thoroughly. It is true that in this present body or temporary house of pilgrimage we groan—oppressed not only by the evil influence of the world and the devil on every hand but also and especially by the weaknesses of our own flesh. For when we would do good, evil is present with us, so that the good which we would do we are often hindered from doing, while the evil which we do not approve often obtrudes itself on us and requires to be continually resisted and overcome. As the Apostle elsewhere declares, we "which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the deliverance of our body,"—the church, into the glorious likeness of our Lord.

* The words *"of them that are saved"* in this text are not found in the older MSS. Very evidently they are an interpolation; because after the nations are saved, brought into harmony with God, they will no longer be "nations" (Gentiles, heathen), but parts of the one holy nation, the kingdom of God.

But our groaning is not with a desire to be unclothed; we do not wish to be without a body, for that at very best all down through the Gospel age would mean to be "asleep in Jesus," waiting for the resurrection morning that then we might be "clothed upon with our house from heaven," our new, perfect and permanent body, our "home." What we prefer is not to have the little spark of present life extinguished, but to have it swallowed up, absorbed into the perfect conditions of the perfect life to which we are begotten, with its perfect body.

"Now he that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who also hath given us the earnest of the Spirit." This perfect condition which we are to obtain in the resurrection will be the grand consummation of our salvation which God has promised; and the new mind, the new will begotten by the Word of truth, is reckoned as the beginning of that new creature, which will be perfected in the divine nature when the first resurrection shall have completed it. The holy Spirit granted us in the present time is a hand payment so to speak, an "earnest" or assurance of the grand and gracious results for which we are hoping and striving, groaning and praying.

"Therefore we are always confident knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body [so long as we feel entirely contented with present conditions—ourselves and our surroundings], we are absent from the Lord." If we were living near to him, "walking with God"; we would not feel perfectly satisfied with present attainments, conditions, etc.; but would feel like pilgrims and strangers, seeking a better rest, a better home, "which God hath in reservation for them that love him." But this, as the Apostle explains, is true only of those who walk by faith and not by sight.

"But we are confident [full of faith toward God, we rejoice to walk by faith], and are well pleased rather to be from home [homeless, pilgrims and strangers on the earth] and to be at home with the Lord" in the spirit of our fellowship.

For this cause we are striving, that whether it be by and by when we reach our home, or whether it be in the present time when we are actually away from home, pilgrims and strangers, we strive that we may be acceptable with the Lord; that we may have his favor and blessing and realize his fellowship and presence and know that we shall ultimately be accepted by him. "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ that every one may receive the things done in the body, according to the things he hath done whether it be good or bad." All through this pilgrimage we are standing at the bar of our Lord's judgment: he is testing us, proving us, to see whether or not we love him and the things which make for righteousness and peace; and if so, how much we are willing to sacrifice for righteousness' sake. He marks the degree of our love by the measure of our self-denials and self-sacrifices for his sake, the truth's sake.

But to thus speak of our bodies as houses can be true only of the "saints," the "new creatures" in Christ. Others of mankind have not duality of nature, and could not properly apply to themselves such expressions as that of Romans 8:10, 11, "If Christ be in you the *body* is [reckoned] *dead* because of sin; but the spirit alive because of [the imputed] righteousness" of Christ. The new nature of the saints, begotten by the Word of truth, is really only the new *will*, which however is henceforth addressed as the real person, and it alone is recognized of God who knows us not after the flesh but after the spirit of our new minds—Christ-minds. Notice also Romans 6:3, 4. These "new creatures" have an old man or outward man that is perishing, and a new man, inward man, or hidden man of the heart who is being renewed day by day.—2 Cor. 4:16; Col. 3:9, 10; Eph. 4:23, 24; 1 Pet. 3:4.

It is written, "He giveth songs in the night," and "He hath put a new song into my mouth." It causes us no surprise to know that the saints will "be joyful in glory" and sing aloud with the high praises of God in their mouths, when it shall be given to them to execute the judgments written (Psa. 149:4-9); but it may strike some as peculiar that the present conditions of God's people, the condition of imperfection and physical frailty, in which we groan and are burdened, should be a condition in which *songs* and thanksgiving and joy should prevail with us. Nevertheless, this is the divine will, as it is the divine statement, respecting all who are truly overcomers: they are all to be joyful in the house of their pilgrimage. Respecting this joy our Lord declares "Your joy no man taketh from you." "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."—John 14; 27; 16:22.

So then, while there is a measure of groaning because

of some burdens on the part of those who have attained to the new life, there are also blessed joys which the world cannot give, neither take away: and these are the source and cause of the unceasing joy and "songs in the night," before the glorious dawn of the new Millennial day: these songs are inspired by the joys granted us in the house of our pilgrimage—while we are actually absent from our "home."

What are our joys which no man taketh from us? and which persecution and affliction and trouble can only deepen and widen and make more sweet? What joy is this? This joy is a foretaste of the blessings to come, an earnest of our inheritance. It is inspired by confidence in him on whom we have believed: confidence that he is both able and willing to perfect the work which he has begun and which we desire shall be perfected in his own best way: confidence that so long as we are firmly holding to his gracious promises with the arms of our faith, he will not permit us to be separated from him. Who shall separate us from the love of God in Christ? Shall tribulation and persecution? Our confidence is that "no one is able to pluck us out of the Father's hand," and that "the Father himself loveth" us, and will not turn us away so long as we desire to abide obediently in his love. Yea, we are confident that all things are working together for good to those who love God; confident that he who is for us is more powerful than all who can be against us. Such confidence is sure to bring joy beyond the world's comprehension, and a peace of God that passeth all understanding, which keeps the heart.

And such joy, produced by the true Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ received into an honest heart, naturally and properly awakens the "songs in the house of our pilgrimage."

"'Mid all the tumult and the strife I hear the music ringing,
It finds an echo in my soul. How can I keep from singing?"

The word "song" has a wider meaning than simply a musical cadence: it is used in the Scriptures and elsewhere to indicate a joyful message of any kind. For instance, we say, referring to the Gospel, the knowledge of the divine plan, "Thou hast put a new song into my mouth, even the loving-kindness of our God." And it is a fact that those who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, those who have received the joy which no man can take from them, those who have tasted of the grace of God in Christ, will not only rejoice and literally sing musical songs with their lips, but they will also rejoice to have their entire lives a song of praise and thanksgiving unto God. The song will bubble over on every occasion, wherever hearing ears are found: so fully will the cleansed, justified and consecrated heart appreciate God's goodness and so greatly will it desire to—

"Tell the whole world these blessed tidings,
And speak of the time of rest that nears."

Wherever Christians find themselves without this joy of the Lord, and where they have no song in the house of their pilgrimage, they have reason to fear that there is something wrong,—that the connections between their own hearts and the Lord are not full and complete. If they are unacquainted with this joy and these songs, it is because they have either never fully accepted the Lord as their portion, and consecrated themselves to his service, or else because certain false doctrines have so terrorized their minds and so completely enslaved them to fear that trustful joys are impossible to them. Such should at once take the proper steps either to make their consecration to the Lord *complete*, so that he can put his Spirit into them as members of his body, and give them the "seal of adoption," and cause them to know the joys of his salvation; or, if fully consecrated and hindered from joy and songs through false doctrine, they should diligently search the Scriptures and find the Lord's message,—"Their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men."—Isa. 29:13.

IN THE CLOUDY DAY

It is true, nevertheless, that our Christian experience is not always of a kind calculated to produce an exuberance of spirit: it is doubtless to our advantage that sometimes there are dark hours such as our dear Redeemer experienced when he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." Such experiences no doubt draw us nearer to the fountain of comfort, of joy and peace, and are blessings in disguise, and amongst the "all things" which are working together for our good. But even in the very midst of trials and difficulties, and while cast down so that the songs do not abound, we may nevertheless in all conditions and at all times realize God's love and care and so firmly hold on to the Lord, with the hand of faith, that we would in the darkest moments be able to realize the joy of our Master's sympathy and love and help, and thus have the joy which no disaster of the present time can interrupt.

Despondency and loss of these joys and songs may sometimes result from ill health: in which case, if the illness be the result of selfish gratification, we have room for a lesson and reform; or it may seem to be the result of unselfish fidelity to the service of the truth, along the lines of duty, and if so, as soon as this is recognized, our joys and songs will return. In illustration let us remember Paul and Silas praising God in the prison of Philippi, while their backs were still lacerated and bleeding.

It should be the aim of the Lord's people to cultivate this joy and the conditions favorable to it, daily. The condition of our hearts has much to do with it; for this joy is not wholly dependent upon the heads,—our knowledge of the divine Word and plan. Its possession and increase depends chiefly upon the heart—the center of our affections. If we set our affections, our hearts, on earthly things and seek for joy through the various gratifications of the flesh, the lust of the eye and the pride of life, etc., we will thereby quench to some extent the spirit of the new mind, and correspondingly decrease the joys of the new mind. On the contrary, the more we overcome the world, the flesh and the devil, the more we seek to do the will of our Father who is in heaven, the more we seek for the fellowship and communion of our dear Redeemer, the more we seek to do those things which are pleasing in his sight, so much the more will we have of the joy and peace which no man taketh from us and which trials, difficulties and persecutions can only make the more sweet and precious.

And the more we have of this new mind, and the closer we are in sympathy with the Lord, the more we will desire to sing heartily "The old, old story of Jesus and his love."

"How happy and blessed the hours,
Since Jesus I always can see!
Sweet prospects, sweet birds and sweet flowers
Have all gained new sweetness to me."

HEALING FOR BROKEN HEARTS

—HELEN WATTS MCVEY.—

Grieving and worn, discouraged,
Sick of the day-long strife,
Bruised by the restless tossing
Over the sea of life;
Hurt by the hands I trusted,
Yearning for rest and home,
Famishing, faint and doubting,
Unto the Book I come.

One of the sweet, old chapters—
Sometimes a verse or two—
Falls on my troubled spirit
Like to a healing dew.
Soothing the fevered pulses,
Comforts the soul's despair;
Lifts from my path the shadows;
Banishes clouds and care.

"Ye that are heavy-laden,"
Burdened with woe and grief,
"Knock and the door shall open";
Here you will find relief.
"Let not your hearts be troubled";
"Only believe and trust":
Thus do the healing waters
Flow o'er Life's desert dust.

WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY

REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDING DEC. 1, 1897

An annual report of this Society's work is due to our readers, almost all of whom, directly or indirectly, financially or otherwise, are colaborers and associates in this service of the Lord and his truth. It will be encouraging to you to know of the prosperity of the general cause, even as it encourages us, to learn of the progress of the work of grace in your own hearts and in the local churches in various quarters. The Lord's work is *one*, and every feature of it must be of deep interest to all who love him and who recognize that we are living in the "harvest" of the Gospel age, and that the chief reaper is the Superintendent, under whose guidance the sickle of truth is being thrust in, for the gathering of all the true wheat into his kingdom garner.

Hence, these annual statements should not be construed as *boasting*, nor yet as *solicitations* for further donations. Surely there is no room for boasting; all that we all unitedly have done, or can do, is so little, compared with what we all would like to do, so little in comparison to what we have received of our Lord, the value of which is beyond computation in silver or gold, that we feel regret for its smallness, and realize that we are not profitable servants who bring our Master gain, but are still his debtors to an infinite amount and can only hope to have him say to us, Well done, good, faithful servants, *you have done what you could!*

As for *soliciting*, we have never done it and will never do it. If this is the Lord's work, and as we believe a special "harvest" work, and he, the great Reaper, is in charge, we need not fear that voices and money and all things needful to its successful accomplishment will not be supplied. Our only concern should be lest we should fail to embrace all the opportunities which come our way. Let us fear, lest an opportunity for service being put within our reach (along any line), any of us should fail to improve such opportunities and be unworthy of the words, "She hath done what she *could*." In the election of the "little flock" for the kingdom, nothing is more evident than that God has refused to define what *sacrifices* we must make—except that it shall primarily consist of a broken and a contrite heart. The outworking of our consecrated lives will prove to what extent our naturally selfish hearts have been broken and are contrite. He who *loves* the Lord and his cause *much*, will *serve* proportionately, and will know no limit to that service except *ability;* which will be so used as to make the most of it.

Nor are money talents and voice and pen talents the only ones the Lord is pleased to use in the "harvest" work: many are rendering very efficient service to the truth as colporteurs and tract distributors. Indeed, probably one-half of all who now rejoice in the present truth are indebted under God's providence to these efficient colaborers,—whose work in many respects closely resembles that of the twelve and the seventy sent out by our Lord in the Jewish harvest, who went from house to house with the good tidings of the kingdom. Besides the fruitage already seen, it is not unreasonable to suppose that a wide influence for the truth and against error has been exerted by the DAWNS and TRACTS and TOWERS, far beyond those who have confessed the truth. There are many evidences of this, not only in the increased opposition of the "chief priests and scribes," but also in the many private and anonymous letters received, asking questions, asking for literature and expressing confidence; but as at the first advent "for fear of the Jews" holding back. Many of these of course may never become "overcomers," and may constitute members in the "great company," and will fail to take a *proper* stand for the Lord and his truth until the complete collapse of Babylon and the attendant "great tribulation" shall thoroughly arouse them. Others of these, however, altho timid and fearful and disposed to inquire, "Have any of the chief priests or scribes believed?" will by and by gain strength and courage from the "meat in due season" and come out bravely on the Lord's side as "overcomers."

We see no reason to think, as some appear to, that all that can be reached with the truth have already been reached. Quite to the contrary, altho this may be true in some places, it does not seem to be generally the case. We are inclined to believe that the Lord is using certain channels to divert conscientious persons from "Babylon" and to more or less prepare them for the full message of present truth; and from these we expect large results during the next few years. For instance; Socialism, Single-Taxism and Nationalism have attracted some people of excellent intentions who, as they see the impossibility of these systems and theories bringing the balm of Gilead and real blessings for which the groaning creation waits, will be good subjects for the truth. We have considerable hope for a favorable influence from DAWN, VOL. IV., upon such. We see also among various earnest "come-outers" and amongst Baptists and Mr. Dowie's followers and the Christian Alliance people and Plymouth Brethren and Adventists good fields for active service with tracts, TOWERS and DAWNS,—*meekly, lovingly, wisely* presented, with a word in season, "seasoned with salt."

The work from this standpoint divides itself into the following branches:——

(1) The WATCH TOWER, which as your servant seeks to do you all the good possible, by stirring up your pure minds by way of remembrance, altho you know many of the things which it presents from the Scriptures, and altho its readers are generally established in the present truth. You will be glad to know that its subscription list, which quite generally represents the deeply interested, is gradually increasing. We were greatly surprised, also, that notwithstanding the depression in financial matters the number who get the TOWER free, as *the Lord's poor*, decreased about two thousand, while the *self paid* subscriptions increased about the same number. Our only fear is that some who cannot afford to pay are neglecting to avail themselves of this feature of the Lord's bounty, which *he provides*, and which we as his servants take pleasure in dispensing.

(2) The Correspondence Department, with which is associated the keeping of accounts, attention to your orders for DAWNS, TRACTS, TOWERS, BIBLES, etc. This department handled about twenty-one thousand of your letters, and sent out about fourteen thousand, four hundred replies. Thank God for the mail facilities of our favored day. Your welcome letters, some full of joy and rejoicing and telling of successes, and some full of sorrow and trouble, asking our prayers and counsel, are all esteemed a privilege and a part of the service which we rejoice to be privileged to engage in. We trust that we of the TOWER office are also remembered in your prayers, for we have trials and discouragements as well as joys and encouragements.

"Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love,
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above."

While this love and fellowship extends to all who own our Lord (whether or not they follow with us) yet properly it extends in an especial degree to those who manifest the holy Spirit of love, who are striving to walk the narrow way of self-sacrifice and to whom the Lord's favor has been manifested, in the opening of their understanding to the present truth. We have efficient colaborers in this department, and will extend it to meet your demands upon it as far as possible. As frequently as possible, however, we refer to the DAWNS or back TOWERS as replies to questions; because the answers there given are generally more thorough than we could give in the compass of a letter, and besides will save time for other features of the work.

(3) The Colporteur Department.—This department might be termed the Evangel-department in this "harvest" work. Dear, consecrated brethren and sisters devote their time and strength and talents to house to house visitation to call the attention of fellow Christians to the "meat in due season" now provided by the Lord for all "the household of faith." Largely through the agency of this department nearly a million copies of MILLENNIAL DAWN in its several volumes have been put into the hands of the public, and millions of tracts distributed. Many who read this article owe their knowledge of the truth (under divine providence) largely to the courage, faith and perseverance of the dear children of God who serve in this department. Laboring not for worldly applause or advantage, but at the expense, the loss, of these, they shall surely have a gracious reward from the great Judge when he makes up his jewels. One dear brother, an Express Co.'s agent in a western city, recently interested and very active in the Lord's service, longed to be in the colporteur work or to do something to assist in this department, and finding another brother anxious for the work he become sponsor for his account and started him as a colporteur. His deficit during the year was probably $120, but he rejoices in this as the next best thing to being a colporteur himself. He has become still more deeply interested, and besides a liberal donation has written promising the proceeds of some property as soon as he can sell it. It is needless to add that he is greatly blessed in heart, and growing in grace and knowledge.

The past year has been one of greater encouragement to these vineyard laborers than several preceding, and very gen-

erally they have been able to fully meet their expenses by economy. They were greatly helped and encouraged by the assistance rendered them last year by Brother Hay's donation. Several new laborers have recently entered this service. The fourth volume of DAWN promises to be specially saleable and an entering wedge for the other volumes, and thus an aid to the colporteurs, some of whom now are making more than their expenses. Let us remember at the throne of grace constantly these whose special service puts them into the forefront of the battle for the truth.

(4) The Tract Distribution Department.—Every WATCH TOWER reader is invited to become an active participant in this branch of the service—by enclosing them in your letter, or by wrapping one in each bundle if you keep a store, or by handing them to your fellow passengers if you travel, or by handing special ones to friends and neighbors as you have opportunity, or by street distribution about the hour when prayer meetings, lectures, etc., take in or dismiss—standing at a little distance (say half a block) so as not to give offense as implying that church people need tracts, however much you may be sure that they do need them.

By reference to another column of this report it will be seen that the tract circulation for the past year reached the highest point yet attained—nearly thirty millions of pages. We congratulate you on the faithfulness which this implies. The Lord's blessing surely has been with you as fearlessly and not ashamed to own the Lord and his Word you have done what you could to dispel superstition and darkness from the minds of God's people, and to enable them to worship the Father in spirit and in truth.

All the interested have not the same opportunities for tract distribution, and some who used comparatively few were the most zealous in furnishing the financial means by which these could be supplied *free* in so large quantities: for be it remembered that all tracts are supplied *free*, being published out of *voluntary* contributions to the tract fund. However few and unpopular we are, dear friends, no other tract society can make so favorable a report. The Lord be praised that his free grace shed abroad in our hearts prompts us to the voluntary services. And having done what we could we feel it an offering far too small, and wholly unworthy of divine notice and acceptance, except in and through the merit of our dear Redeemer's sacrifice.

(5) The "Pilgrim" Preaching Department.—While all of the Lord's people are pilgrims and strangers and pilgrims journeying toward the heavenly Canaan, and while all also are preachers to the extent of their opportunities and talents, yet we use the above term to describe those who are going about from place to place where as many as four TOWER subscribers reside to meet with and encourage the brethren, both with public and private meetings. Like other departments this one is for your *service* and the Lord's glory, and not for money making. You are not asked to guarantee a salary of one or two hundred dollars per night for the service, but it is *free*—no collections even are taken up, and no money solicited in any manner: not even for traveling expenses. Three brethren are at present giving their entire time to this branch of the service, while twelve give more or less of their time; all of them are very zealous, however, and seeking to be more qualified and used by the Master in his service.

The traveling and other necessary expenses of these ministers (*servants*) are met out of your voluntary donations to the Tract Fund; and they ask no wages, preferring to wait for the rewards which God has promised. Nor are they laggards and drones: when they visit your town or city or village it means business—the King's business, which requires energy. They come to you expecting to hold afternoon and evening meetings daily, while they stay; and their stay will be for one, two or three days as per cards of notification. These are the Lord's servants, and your servants for his sake: receive them as such. Let them receive the love of brethren; show toward them the hospitality you would surely extend to the Lord, for they are "members of his body," and like yourself his representatives.

One very earnest brother, who for years has been a generous contributor to the work and helpful every way, writes us that being appreciated by his employer he has received a substantial increase in his salary and thereby expects to be able to considerably increase his '98 contributions to the general fund for the spread of the good tidings: and having heard one of the "Pilgrims" he desires to become responsible for the expenses of one of these, after which, if he be able to give more, it shall go to the general work. This dear brother, who resides in eastern Pennsylvania, is as modest and meek as he is zealous and unselfish and insists that his name be not mentioned. But he does this unto the Lord, and the Lord knows of it and, we may be sure, appreciates it and will by and by reward. Graciously our Lord has provided that every one that loves him may in some manner manifest that love;—whether by casting two mites into his treasury or by giving even a cup of cold water to one of his disciples. "Where there's a will there's a way."

(6) Through the "Pilgrims" and through leaders and others, we have reports from all over the "harvest" field, continually. We are glad to be able to inform you that while our great adversary, Satan, is permitted by the Lord to trouble and prove and sift his people as heretofore, and in some respects more than ever, yet in our opinion the church everywhere has been growing in grace during the past year, more than ever before; and consequently is better able to stand such attacks and get a blessing instead of an injury out of them, even tho the siftings result in the falling away of some, who despite every effort toward "pulling them out of the fire," become "offended."

Many letters have told us of blessings which resulted from following the suggestions of the Aug. 15th TOWER,—that as an assistance in the cultivation of the holy spirit of *love* each should ask help from on high each morning and should review the success or failure of the day before the Lord at evening prayer; and that on alternate Sundays Matt. 5:1-16 and 1 Cor. 13:1-13 be read and pondered. We trust that many more than we have yet heard from have followed this plan and experienced a blessing. There is a blessing in it for all who will practice it during 1898. Who will join us? Brethren and Sisters, pray for us, as we also pray for you all!

DISTRIBUTION ACCOUNT

During the year from Dec. 1, 1896, to Dec. 1, 1897, there has been circulated free the following reading matter, paid for out of the voluntary donations to the Tract Fund,—

Copies of Old THEOLOGY TRACTS	1,423,010
" " ZION'S WATCH TOWER	332,212

Since tracts vary greatly in the number of their pages, it is customary to state their circulation by pages. Thus stated the foregoing represent a

Total of Tract Pages	29,347,838

The total number of copies of MILLENNIAL DAWN, circulated by the cooperation of this fund (not at its expense), was 69,891

FINANCIAL ACCOUNT

EXPENDITURES:—	
For Tracts and Towers sent out free	$ 7,296.90
Labor, for mailing same	540.00
Postage, freight, wrappers, etc.,	760.00
Foreign translations, etc., account	1,341.99
Traveling expenses, "Pilgrims," etc.,	1,935.20
Balance cash on hand	191.80
Total	$12,065.89
RECEIPTS:—	
Cash balance on hand, Dec. 1, '96	$ 314.35
From "Good Hopes,"	8,165.61
" other sources	3,585.93
Total	$12,065.89

"Good Hopes" blanks go with this issue, as usual; but do not understand them to be *requests*, they are merely notifications of an *opportunity* to join in this service.

The office associates and colaborers join in sending to all the TOWER readers our best wishes, Christian love, and the compliments of the holiday season. May our Lord give us all more and more to abound in all the fruits of the spirit and the service of each other and the fruit.

FAVORABLE COMMENT

"The fourth volume of the MILLENNIAL DAWN series, issued under the ominous title of *'the Day of Vengeance,'* certainly takes in a very wide field, as it gives an extensive collection of facts and figures relating to almost every phase of social, political, financial and religious matters, as they bear upon the present situation. Nor are these dryly stated; on the contrary, they are introduced in such a manner as to fascinate every reader who is at all interested in the consideration of the wonderful events of 'our day.'"—*Pittsburg Press.*

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

DEC. 19.—1 JOHN 1:5-2:6.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—1 JNO. 1:9.

The Apostle's address is not to unbelievers, unjustified persons, "sinners" in the ordinary sense of the word; on the contrary, he is addressing the justified and sanctified in Christ Jesus, and he classes himself with these, using the plural pronoun "we." The frequent mistake of applying this and similar passages to sinners in general has been injurious in two particulars:

(1) It has been injurious to the unregenerate, in that it has given some the impression that there is no difference between the church and the world; and that all alike have access to God in prayer and for the forgiveness of daily trespasses. It has thus hindered some from realizing the necessity of faith in the atonement, and from definitely entering into covenant relationship with the Lord under the terms of the New Covenant. On the contrary all should be clearly informed of the fact that repentance and a particular, positive acceptance of Christ as their personal Saviour are absolutely necessary, before they can "be accepted in the Beloved," and be treated as "sons of God," and enjoy the privileges of this relationship,—prayer, fellowship with God, divine care or providential oversight of their affairs and interests, and the favor of forgiveness of daily trespasses through the merit of the great High Priest.

(2) This oversight has had an injurious effect upon some Christians who have gone to the extreme of claiming that they can never commit sin, after their past sins have been graciously forgiven by the Lord, and after they have entered into the New Covenant relationship. Hence, we have the very wrong views and teachings of so-called "perfectionists" who claim, not merely that they are *reckonedly* perfect now, but that they are *actually* perfect in all their thoughts, words and deeds,—deceiving themselves and laying themselves liable to many grievous errors, as the Apostle declares in this connection.—Verses 8, 10.

The object of the Apostle John in writing this epistle he clearly states, saying, "These things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." It is a noteworthy fact that the vast majority of Christians never experience the *fulness* of joy and peace and blessing that they might possess. Too many are content with simply diluted first principles of the doctrine of Christ; and, as the Apostle Paul declares, such are merely "babes in Christ." They have a blessing of course in any relationship to the Lord, but they have not the fulness of joy which would be theirs if they progressed in grace and in knowledge "to the full stature of a man in Christ." The object of the Apostle's writing them was to stir up the pure minds of believers to an appreciation and enjoyment of their privileges, that thereby they might grow and develop.

The Apostle follows the example of our Lord Jesus in symbolizing truth and righteousness as Light, and sin and every evil way as so much of opposing darkness. God himself thus considered would be the very perfection of light,—"in him is no darkness," no sin, no imperfection. With this thought before the mind, the Apostle points out that any growth of fellowship with God which we may aspire to, must be along the lines of truth, goodness, purity; and he points out that it would be sin for us to say to others or to imagine in our own hearts that we are walking with God and having fellowship with him, if our course of life is a dark, a sinful one. Such are merely deceiving themselves and others: they are not deceiving God, and they are not getting the blessings of those who do "walk in the light."

Moreover, to the extent that we walk in the light and in harmony and fellowship with God, we will find ourselves in fellowship with all others who are like-minded. So then, if we do not "love the brethren, whom we have seen," so as to be able to have fellowship and spiritual pleasure with them, that would be an indication that we are not wholly in harmony and fellowship with God. But who are the "brethren?" Our Lord tells us that not all who profess his name are true brethren; he says, "Not everyone that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven [be recognized as his brethren and joint-heirs], but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." We thus see that it is by our deeds and not merely by our professions that we are accepted of the Lord who again says, "Who are my brethren? . . . . Verily, I say unto you he that doeth the will of my Father the same is my brother."—Matt. 7:21; 12:50.

So then, we are not to anticipate "fellowship" with all who name the name of Christ as a proof of fellowship with the Father, and that we are in the light: we are merely to anticipate this *true* fellowship with those who are earnestly seeking to do the Father's will, to serve his cause and exemplify the instructions of his Word, in their deeds as well as in their professions. Between all such there must be, whether hidden or open, a *bond of fellowship* and union—that bond is the one faith and one baptism into the one Lord.

But while this fellowship between us and the Lord and all who have his Spirit is based upon our walking in the light, our following in his footsteps to the extent of our ability, nevertheless it does not imply absolute freedom from the imperfection of sin; altho under the New Covenant* arrangement nothing is charged up to us as sin except in proportion as it has been *wilfully* done. Nevertheless, because of the manifold temptations, and the weakness of our flesh, the result of inherited predisposition toward sin, it is impossible for us to avoid "short-comings" and faults. These may be properly termed sins as in this lesson, because "sin is a transgression of the law," however unintentional. But the divine arrangement under the New Covenant, on behalf of the Lord's people, is that these *unintentional* faults and shortcomings need not be charged up against us as sins; but instead may be cleansed away upon our application to the great High Priest, through the merit of the precious blood. Thus it is that the blood of Jesus Christ our Lord cleanseth us from all sin—keeps us clean from sin, if realizing our imperfections we continually make application for forgiveness.

The Apostle uses the word "sin" in a different sense than the above, further on in this epistle, saying (3:6-9), "Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him nor [even] known him. . . . . He that committeth sin is of the devil . . . . Whosoever is begotten of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin because he is begotten of God." Again he says (5:18), "We know that whosoever is begotten of God keepeth himself, and the wicked one toucheth him not."

In these passages the Apostle uses the word "sin" in its full or absolute sense, meaning wilful sin, deliberate sin, intentional sin; sins that are not merely shortcomings and faults, inherited from our ancestors. No one, the Apostle assures us, who has been begotten of the spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of holiness and truth, could have any sympathy with sin so as to wilfuly, knowingly and intentionally engage therein. All who so love sin and wilfully do it and approve it after they have a knowledge of the truth, are children of darkness who love darkness and who thus show that they have the spirit or disposition of Satan.

But let us return to the consideration of the other use of the word "sin" as found in this lesson, applying the term to the faults and imperfections which God's people are zealously striving against, and seeking to stamp out of their mortal bodies, and against which they are fighting a good fight and coming off conquerors, and more than conquerors, through him who loved us and bought us with his precious blood. The Apostle intimates that there is danger that some will go to the extreme of denying that they have any faults, and thus deceive themselves and get into a snare of the adversary. It may be asked, What difference can it make if they are seeking to live godly, whether they claim to live perfectly, or admit that they are imperfect and apply continually for cleansing through the precious blood? We reply that it makes a great difference: only as we confess our sins can they be forgiven, consequently those who deny that they have any sins, faults, imperfections, have a great load of them uncancelled, unforgiven, charged up against them; and because of this they would be accounted unworthy to be taken further along in the path of light, under the lead of the holy Spirit, into the heights and depths and lengths and breadths of the love and wisdom of God, as revealed in his Word as meat in due season for the household of faith. Thus we see that there is but the one proper course of faith and conduct, in which we may have a complete fellowship with the Lord: those who take any other course are making God a liar, and he would not fellowship with them, but he will leave them to the darkness of their own way. Can we wonder then that so many are in darkness and lack evidences of fellowship with God, when we see how few confess their faults and seek to be cleansed in the only way of divine appointment?

These things are written not to cultivate in us the thought that we may sin with impunity, and be overtaken with faults through carelessness and inattention to the divine Word, and then go to the Lord for forgiveness. Quite to the contrary, these assurances of divine favor and willingness to forgive are designed to have upon our hearts a mellowing influence

* See June 15, 1919, issue for criticism of Covenant articles.

which will make us all the more careful to avoid sin, and to maintain fellowship with him who is the perfection of light and holiness. "These things are written that we sin not;" that we become not boastful of self, self-righteous, self justified, and thus abominable in the Lord's sight: but that, fleeing from our weaknesses and imperfections, we lay hold upon the grace of God in Christ for their forgiveness, and for grace increasingly to fight a good fight against sin.

"If any man [in Christ] sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." Here again, "*any man*" does not refer to those who are out of Christ, but to those who are under the terms and conditions of the New Covenant. Such alone are addressed in this Epistle. The world has no Advocate with the Father, because it has not accepted Christ, and he is the Advocate only for those who have accepted him and who are striving to overcome sin.

Our Advocate is more than an advocate, more than a representative at the bar of divine Justice, interested in our welfare and forgiveness: he is in addition the one who gave himself for us, who at Calvary finished the work of making a propitiation (*satisfaction*) for our sins. This is the reason why we may come "with boldness to the throne of grace," not only realizing that God is for us, and that our Lord Jesus sympathizes with and is our Advocate, but also and specially realizing the merit of the sacrifice which he has already paid to Justice, and which he has made fully applicable on behalf of all who love and obey him, on application.

But, says the Apostle, he is the propitiation not merely for our sins (the church's sins), but "*also for the sins of the whole world.*" What does this mean? Is he the Advocate for the whole world? No; not yet. The world has not yet been called and drawn to holiness and truth. During the present age "no man can come unto Christ except the Father *draw him.*" And this drawing influence of the truth is at present extended only to "*him that hath an ear to hear.*" A great mass of mankind have never heard in any sense of the word of the grace of God, and of the propitiation and forgiveness, provided for all in Christ. Indeed, it is a remarkably small number who "have tasted that the Lord is gracious."

Yet so surely as the propitiation was made "*for* the sins of the whole world," just so surely shall every member of mankind be brought to a knowledge of the fact, and to an opportunity to avail himself of the provided blessing. It is to this end that the great Millennial age has been promised and is being prepared for: and it is concerning that age of blessing to "all the families of the earth" that the Lord declares through the prophet "In that day the blind eyes shall be opened and the deaf ears shall be unstopped. It is of that time that our Lord Jesus also declared, "And I, if I be lifted up, will *draw all men* unto me." It is by virtue of his having been lifted up as the propitiation, the sin-offering, "for the *sins of the whole world,*" that our glorified Lord will eventually be privileged to be the Judge of the world and to grant forgiveness and reconciliation and restitution to all who will heartily obey him; while "whosoever will not obey that Prophet will be cut off from amongst the people,"—in the second death.—Acts 3:23.

As the drawing now, by the Father, is not a compulsion, but merely a constraining by the truth, through a knowledge of it, so the drawing of the Millennial age upon the world of mankind will not be a compulsion, but merely the influence of righteousness and truth constraining toward love for righteousness and thus to the reward of righteousness—eternal life.

The Apostle seems to intimate in our lesson that quite a good number may claim an intimate knowledge of God falsely, and hence with great plainness of speech he informs us that, "He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him." It is thus very evident that the Apostle does not mean merely a knowledge *about* God but an intimate knowledge of God; implying fellowship and communion with him: he then gives us a test by which we may judge accordingly whether or not we are new creatures in the Lord and have the love of God developed in us to any extent. The test is *obedience.* In proportion as we keep the Lord's Word, in like proportion the love of God is perfected in us; for if we have received the mind of Christ, the holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the effect will be to cause us to both will and do his good pleasure—to the extent of our ability. And this ability should be continually on the increase year by year. And altho we may not hope to be perfected until we shall be "changed" and be granted our new resurrection bodies, nevertheless all the while we may keep so closely in touch with the Lord in the spirit of our minds that we may have continual fellowship with him: and by confessing our faults and seeking his forgiveness we may continue to the end of our journey clean from sin, even tho we must still acknowledge the imperfections of the flesh,—that in our flesh dwelleth no perfection.

BAPTISM OF JESUS AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF HIS WORK

JAN. 2.—MATT. 3:7-17.

"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."—Matt. 3:17.

John, the Baptizer, was a fearless minister of the truth, whose courage qualified him well for the work given him to do, the announcement and introduction of our Lord Jesus and the new dispensation which his ministry inaugurated. And unless it be clearly recognized that a great change of dispensation was due and at hand at that time, and that John was the divine agent announcing that crisis in their affairs to Israel, the lesson before us cannot be rightly appreciated or understood.

At the time in question, Judaism was in many respects in a more flourishing condition than it had ever before been: idolatry in its cruder forms was unknown, and Phariseeism was the controlling influence. The word Pharisee today has come to be the synonym of hypocrite and impostor, but at that time it was the name given to and accepted by the professedly most pious class in Israel, people who professed consecration to the Lord, who studied the Law diligently and were zealous in prayer and the propagation of the Jewish religion. It was the time of the greatest missionary effort that had ever been made by the Jews, as our Lord testified, "Ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte." The Sadducees also professed holiness of life, altho they denied much of the Scripture and were practically the "higher critics" in religious matters, among the Jews of that city.

Under these circumstances we may imagine the surprise and consternation which John's preaching would arouse when he addressed members of the leading religious sects as sinners, "a generation of vipers." He thus implied what our Lord plainly stated to the same classes, namely, that their religion was one of outward forms and ceremony merely, and not of the heart. We fear that if the same inspired teacher were to preach today he would similarly address and surprise many who have "a form of godliness" and outward devotion to Sectarianism and to its propagation.

"Who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" We do not understand John's language here to refer to flames and torments after death, but to a wrath of God about to come upon that nation; because of its hypocritical formalism and failure to live up to the light and privileges which it enjoyed.—Compare 1 Thess. 2:16; Rom. 9:22, 27-29 and Luke 21:23, 24.

The fact that the Scribes and Pharisees came to John and were baptized of him signified repentance and turning to God; but John points out that more than an outward profession of repentance is necessary; that there should be such a reform of life as would yield fruit and clearly show the repentance. He clearly saw that the Jews were resting self-satisfied in the divine promises to Abraham; feeling that because they were his natural offspring they must therefore, necessarily, be the heirs of the promises made to him. Thus God's favor to them was proving an ensnarement, a hindrance to their proper humility of heart and carefulness of life. John would have them see that to be heirs of the Abrahamic promise would necessitate that they should have also Abraham's faith, and works or fruits corresponding and resulting. And he declares, therefore, that God is able to raise up children to Abraham, to inherit the promises, wholly outside of Abraham's fleshly posterity: which he has done during this Gospel age;—taking not stones, but Gentiles for the purpose.

Proceeding, John boldly declares that the testing time, the critical time for them as a people, has come. For centuries they had been the recipients of divine favor and blessings and mercies: now the question with them was,—To be or

not to be longer God's peculiar people. The axe of divine judgment is whetted, and the time of crisis has come, and it would, thenceforth be an individual matter and not a national question as to who shall be the children of Abraham. Every one of them in whom would be found the good fruitage of righteousness would be spared of the Lord and transplanted into the more favorable condition of the Gospel dispensation, while every one of them found unworthy would be cut off from divine favor, even tho they outwardly made loud professions. Thus cut down they would be cast into the fire,—the fire of trouble which came upon that nation, the "wrath" of verse seven, which ended with their complete overthrow.

John recognized and freely stated that his work was merely a reformatory and preparatory work and that the one who was to do the testing was mightier than himself—the Messiah. He declared himself so inferior as to be unworthy to be his sandal-bearer. This greater one, for whom he was the forerunner or introducer or herald, was the one who would bless all those found worthy of a blessing, by baptizing them with the holy Spirit from on high; and he also would be the one who would send the "fire," judgment, tribulation or destruction upon the others of that nation found unworthy of the holy Spirit. This prophecy of John we recognize as amply and literally fulfilled. Those gathered out as a result first of John's preaching, and subsequently of the preaching of the Lord and his apostles during his ministry, were blessed with the benediction of the holy spirit, the "Spirit of adoption," at Pentecost; and others subsequently were gathered and likewise blessed by the ministry of the holy Spirit in these; and it was not long after Pentecost before the fires of sedition, strife, envy, malice, hatred, etc., began to burn throughout the land of Israel and ultimately resulted in the utter destruction of their national existence, A. D. 70.

John uses the harvesting process as an illustration of our Lord's work; and this is in full accord with the statement of Scripture, that our Lord in the end of the Jewish age was the Reaper or Harvester who had a definitely appointed harvesting time, in which he gathered the real wheat of that nation into the Gospel garner and then cleaned up the field by burning the chaff or refuse. John declared that he would thoroughly cleanse the "wheat," fan out the "chaff" from the "wheat." The separation between the mere professors and the Israelites indeed should be thoroughly and completely accomplished at the hands of this great Harvester during the harvest time of that age. The unquenchable fire in which the chaff of that people suffered, was the time of trouble already referred to in verses seven and eleven, which culminated A. D. 70. It was an "*unquenchable* fire" or destruction: they endeavored to quench or stop the trouble many times, but all their efforts were fruitless: it was unquenchable because the Lord intended that it should thoroughly consume them nationally. Nor have they ever since succeeded in restoring their national polity; nor will they succeed until the full number of the elect church has been completed (Rom. 11:25), and until the times of the Gentiles (the period apportioned to Gentile governments, Luke 21:24) shall have run their course, A. D. 1915.

Another Scripture shows us that our Lord at this time, when coming to John to be baptized of him, was thirty years of age. The age of thirty was the beginning of manhood's estate according to the Law, and since John was only six months older than Jesus, it is the reasonable presumption that he had been preaching just six months before our Lord's baptism occurred. John's objection to the baptism of Jesus (his cousin) whose nobility of birth and character he already recognized (Luke 1:41-44), was because he recognized baptism only from the Jewish standpoint, and not from the standpoint of the new dispensation, which began with our Lord. John's baptism of the Jews signified merely a repentance of sin and reformation of life. But not so our Lord Jesus' baptism: it meant another thing entirely. Our Lord had no sins to repent of, nor to reform from, being "holy harmless separate from sinners" as John also recognized. Our Lord's baptism signified *consecration*, a full giving up or burial of the will, its immersion into the will of God. Our Lord made such a consecration himself at the earliest moment possible under the Law, thirty years of age. And now he was merely symbolizing that real baptism by a water baptism, which constituted an outward confession of his consecration to God, and was an example for all who should afterward seek to walk in his footsteps.

As our Lord came up out of the water the Father granted a special manifestation of approval, by communicating to him the holy Spirit, marking his acceptance and sealing him as the heir of the blessings already promised. Not only was the holy Spirit given, but an outward manifestation of the gift was granted especially to John; that he might know of a surety that Jesus was the Messiah, accepted of God as such, and might announce him to those who had accepted his ministry and become truly repentant of sins and desirous of bearing the fruits of righteousness. It does not appear that the multitude saw the manifestation of the spirit in the form of a dove lighting down upon our Lord.—John 1:29-34.

Why the form of a dove should be adopted for a manifestation of the holy Spirit is a question. We presume because a dove is a fit representative or emblem of gentleness and meekness; and from the time that a dove returned to the Ark of Noah, with an olive branch in its mouth, both the dove and the olive branch have been symbols of peace and good will. The dove, therefore, was a most fitting emblem of the spirit of meekness, patience, long suffering, brotherly kindness, love, and faithfulness which is the Spirit of the Father—the holy Spirit.

At this same time came a voice from heaven, saying "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." It would appear that such a voice was heard on three different occasions. (1) At the time of our Lord's baptism here narrated. (2) On the mount of transfiguration. (Mark 9:7) (3) At the close of our Lord's ministry, just before the crucifixion. (John 12:28) Yet apparently these voices, while understood and appreciated by some as attestations to our Lord's acceptance with the Father, were by others variously attributed; some saying that an angel had spoken and others that it thundered. (John 12:28, 29) And so it seems to be with every manifestation of divine truth. Those who are in a right attitude of heart can and do receive the Lord's message and find abundant ground for faith and trust; while others, out of harmony with the divine arrangement, are continually therefore skeptical and lacking of to them satisfactory evidence. The truth, evidently, then as now, was meat only for those who hunger and thirst after righteousness; and these who have the hearing ear are such as have honesty of heart and a full consecration to the Lord.

To draw a lesson from these things specially applicable to our own day should be a part of our object. We have come to the "harvest" time of the Gospel age: again the chief Reaper is present; not in the flesh, to be a sin-offering, but now in the glory of his exalted divine nature. The axe is laid to the root of the trees again. It is no longer a question of being a citizen of favored Christendom, nor of being a member of its various sects; but it is an individual test. Every one (not every individual in the world, just as it was not every individual in the world in the days of John the baptizer—then it was every one in the Jewish nation, now it is every one in the nominal Christendom, and does not at all refer to the masses of heathendom) is now to be subjected to certain tests, and by these tests he will either be accepted and further blessed or be rejected and suffer the consquences. The testings of the "harvest" of this age which are parallel to those of the Jewish age and were typified thereby, are clearly pointed out in our Lord's discourse of Matt. 13:24-43. The Jewish harvest is spoken of as being a separation of wheat from chaff, while the harvest of this age is designated a separation of "wheat" from "tares." As the Jews little realized that the Lord and his apostles in their ministry were doing this separating work by the preaching of the truth, so nominal Christendom little realizes today that a similar work and separation as between "wheat" and "tares" is now in progress. As the Jews in general failed to recognize the gathering of the "wheat" of their age into the garner of the Gospel dispensation, so nominal Christians today fail to see that the "wheat" of this age is being gathered by the Lord into his garner, the kingdom. As the Jews failed to recognize the binding and blinding influences which came upon them and enkindled amongst them as fires of judgment, wrath, destruction, so nominal Christians today, while they recognize the peculiar binding together in social bundles now in progress, and while they see all the preparations for the coming great social revolution, time of trouble, wrath, burning, destruction of present systems, etc., are nevertheless blind respecting what all these things really mean, and fail to see that these are features of the "harvest" work now in progress, under the supervision of the great Reaper. They fail also to recognize him present, notwithstanding the repeated declaration, similar to that made by John at the first advent—"There standeth one among you whom ye know not."

THIS JOURNAL AND ITS MISSION

This journal is set for the defense of the only true foundation of the Christian's hope now being so generally repudiated—Redemption through the precious blood of "the man Christ Jesus who gave himself a *ransom* [a corresponding price, a substitute] for all." (1 Pet. 1:19; 1 Tim. 2:6) Building up on this sure foundation the gold, silver and precious stones (1 Cor. 3:11-15; 2 Pet. 1:5-11) of the Word of God, its further mission is to—"Make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery which . . . has been hid in God, . . . to the intent that now might be made known by the church the manifold wisdom of God"—"which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed."—Eph. 3:5-9, 10.

It stands free from all parties, sects and creeds of men, while it seeks more and more to bring its every utterance into fullest subjection to the will of God in Christ, as expressed in the Holy Scriptures. It is thus free to declare boldly whatsoever the Lord hath spoken—according to the divine wisdom granted unto us, to understand. Its attitude is not dogmatical, but confident; for we know whereof we affirm, treading with implicit faith upon the sure promises of God. It is held as a trust, to be used only in his service; hence our decisions relative to what may and what may not appear in its columns must be according to our judgment of his good pleasure, the teaching of his Word, for the upbuilding of his people in grace and knowledge. And we not only invite but urge our readers to prove all its utterances by the infallible Word to which reference is constantly made, to facilitate such testing.

To Us The Scriptures Clearly Teach

That the church is "the Temple of the Living God"—peculiarly "His workmanship;" that its construction has been in progress throughout the Gospel age—ever since Christ became the world's Redeemer and the chief cornerstone of this Temple, through which, when finished, God's blessings shall come "to all people," and they find access to him.—1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:20-22; Gen. 28:14; Gal. 3:29.

That meantime the chiseling, shaping and polishing, of consecrated believers in Christ's atonement for sin, progresses; and when the last of these "living stones," "elect and precious," shall have been made ready, the great Master Workman will bring all together in the First Resurrection; and the Temple shall be filled with his glory, and be the meeting place between God and men throughout the Millennium.—Rev. 15:5-8.

That the basis of hope, for the church and the world, lies in the fact that "Jesus Christ, by the grace of God, tasted death for *every* man," "a ransom for all," and will be "the true light which lighteth *every man that cometh into the world*," "in due time."—Heb. 2:9; John 1:9; 1 Tim. 2:5, 6.

That the hope of the church is that she may be like her Lord, "see him as he is," be "partaker of the divine nature," and share his glory as his joint-heir.—1 John 3:2; John 17:24; Rom. 8:17; 2 Pet. 1:4.

That the present mission of the church is the perfecting of the saints for the future work of service; to develop in herself every grace; to be God's witness to the world; and to prepare to be the kings and priests of the next age.—Eph. 4:12; Matt. 24:14; Rev. 1:6; 20:6.

That the hope for the world lies in the blessings of knowledge and opportunity to be brought to *all* by Christ's Millennial kingdom—the restitution of all that was lost in Adam, to all the willing and obedient, at the hands of their Redeemer and his glorified church.—Acts 3:19-21; Isa. 35.

CHARLES T. RUSSELL, Editor.

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"MY PEACE I GIVE UNTO YOU"

"When *he* giveth quietness, *who* then can make trouble?"—Job 34:29.

"Like a river glorious is God's perfect peace,
Over all victorious in its glad increase.
Perfect—yet it floweth fuller every day;
Perfect—yet it groweth deeper all the way.

"Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as he promised, perfect peace and rest.
Hidden in the hollow of his blessed hand,
Never foe can follow, never traitor stand.

"Not a surge of worry, not a shade of care,
Not a blast of hurry toucheth spirit there.
Every joy or trial cometh from above,
Traced upon our dial by the sun of love.

"We may trust him solely all for us to do:
They who trust him wholly, find him wholly true.
Stayed upon Jehovah, hearts are truly blest,
Finding, as he promised, perfect peace and rest."

THE ANGELS' SONG

"It came upon the midnight clear,
That glorious song of old,
From angels bending near the earth,
To touch their harps of gold:
'Peace on earth, good-will to men'
From heaven's all-glorious King.
The world in solemn stillness lay
To hear the angels sing.

"And lo, the days are hastening on,
By prophets seen of old,
When with the ever-circling years
Shall come the time foretold,
When the new heaven and earth shall own
The Prince of Peace their King,
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing."